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using all the information obtained from the customer throughout the process.

5 The proposal and presentation modules 412 and 414 are integrated with the rest of the system via the event manager 401A. The system recognizes key sales events as described above. For example, the generation of a proposal may automatically generate a follow-up to-do list in the self-management portion of the system. Additionally, the system may recognize the significance of proposal  
10 generation and note in the lead generation component 102 the name of a customer and the type of product or service the customer is interested in. This information can be used to generate automatic mailings to the customer about new related products.

15 Fig. 5 illustrates the subcomponent modules of the order management component 106. The order management component 106 includes an order submit module 502, and order status module 504, a change order module 506, and order acknowledgment module 508, etc. The order management  
20 component is integrated into the system to support the order creation and submission process, including configuration and pricing, at the point of sale. In this manner, a salesperson can use the system to automatically convert a customer "solution" to a purchasing need,  
25 developed using the time with customer component 104, into an order. This ensures that what was sold to the customer is actually ordered and subsequently delivered. Moreover, costs are reduced as administrative functions and errors are removed from the process. Customers are more satisfied  
30 because they receive what they ordered. Moreover, the order management component 106 allows the salesperson to directly prepare supplemental orders and changes. As a result customers are able to deal directly with the salesperson throughout the entire sales process, increasing  
35 customer satisfaction.

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The order creation and submittal module 502 is provided as part of the order management component to facilitate creation and submission of an order by adding any addition information to a proposal or quote required by the company's order fulfillment process such as "bill to", "ship to", deliver instructions, etc. All information previously entered via the other components and modules of the system, as relevant to the order, will automatically be reflected in the order creation and submission module 502. For example, product and option data for the order are obtained from the configuration module 406 of the time with customer component 104 to prevent errors in the order process. The module may prompt the salesperson for all additional required information and provide error checking and acceptance criteria to ensure adequate customer solutions are provided. The order acknowledgement module 508 receives an order acknowledgement which is passed back to the user through the communications component 118 in the back office system 200.

An order status module 504 is provided to allow the salesperson to inquire and monitor the status of an order at any time throughout the order process. The module may include facilities for automatically generating a periodic report for the salesperson to monitor the status of outstanding orders.

The change order module 506 allows the salesperson to request changes to orders that have already been submitted to the manufacturer. This module may be integrated via the back office system 200 with the enterprise order fulfillment process. Product and option data for a revised order may be provided from the configuration module 406 to prevent errors. For example, the configuration module 406 can be used when a change is requested to ensure that the change to the order does not <sup>affect</sup> ~~effect~~ other components of the ordered product. This information may then be directly

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passed to the change order module 506 of the order management component 106 for preparation and submission of a change order. The user is, again, prompted for all required information. Alternatively, the change orders may  
5 be produced directly in the change order module, with the change order module 506 being integrated to the configuration module 406 automatically checking the changed configuration for compatibility. Error checking and acceptance criteria can be applied to the changed order by  
10 the system to ensure adequate customer satisfaction.

The event manager 201A recognizes order events and initiates appropriate action. For example, the event manager may recognize an order for a customer and pass the customer name and product ordered to lead generation  
15 component 102. Like the proposal, the order process may indicate a customer's potential interest in other related products. The event manager will further note the context in which a customer is linked to a product. A customer who has ordered a product is different than one who merely  
20 requested a proposal. While both information is useful, the event manager 201A recognizes the context in which the information was obtained and can automatically generate different responses based on the context. The event manager may also determine by accessing customer  
25 information databases whether the order is submitted by an existing customer on a first time purchase. If the order comes from a first time purchase, a letter can be automatically generated which reflects the new customer status.

Fig. 6 illustrates the subcomponent modules of the customer retention component 108. The customer retention component 108 includes a customer satisfaction module 602, a newsletter and mailings module 604, a customer contact module 606, etc. The subcomponent modules provide an  
30 integrated system for retaining customers as future, repeat  
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customers. Two key aspects of the customer retention component 108 are provided in the systems planning capabilities and information sharing abilities. Using the customer satisfaction module 602, the salesperson, possibly  
5 with the assistance of the customer, develops a customer business plan. This allows the sales person to manage sales activities as it relates to the customer's business plan. The information obtained in developing the plan using the customer satisfaction modules 602 may also be  
10 referred to by other components and modules as desired. For example, if the salesperson is working with the customer to develop a new sales solution to a customers needs using the time with customer component, as a solution is specified the system may automatically refer to the  
15 customer's business plan to determine if the proposed solution is consistent with the plan. The customer satisfaction module 602 assists the salesperson in identifying key steps, deliverables, schedules, purchase goals, and key events for the upcoming year or period. The  
20 modules also facilitates management of promotions which are set up between the salesperson and the customer.

The customer satisfaction module 602 is connected to the event manager 201A for integration with the self management component 110. The self management component  
25 110 provides the functionality for the user to track and schedule the customer retention activities and objectives established using the customer satisfaction module 602. It is noted that the event manager 201A will recognize operations carried in the customer satisfaction module 602,  
30 the context in which the plan is developed and may direct the self management component 102 to automatically insert tasks and to *do lists* to assist the salesperson in following the plan.

The newsletters component 604 provides a mechanism for  
35 the system to generate and mail out newsletters to

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customers based on the information about the customer available within the databases of the data component 116. For example, the event manager may automatically recognize an event which occurs during the sales process with a potential customer, and notify the newsletter module 604 of the customer retention component 108 to place the particular customer on a newsletter mail out list.

The customer contact module 606 assists the salesperson in remaining aware at all times of any contact or activity between a customer and the company such as warranty, service, marketing responses, and customer support. The event manager 201A, recognizes such events within the system and notifies the customer contact module 606. The salesperson may use the customer contact module 606 to review such contact with a particular customer. Information collected through other enterprise systems may also be transferred to the sales system to monitor ongoing customer satisfaction and new sales opportunities on the basis of information gathered via the other enterprise system.

Fig. 7 illustrates the subcomponent modules of the self management support component 110. As described above, the self management support component 110 provides tools to the salesperson to use throughout the sales process in conjunction with the core components of the sales process. The self management support component 110 includes a contact management module 702, an opportunity management module 704, a calendar module 706, a "to-do" list module 708, a forecast module 710, and a time management module 711, each coupled to a scheduler module 712. The scheduler module 712 is coupled along with an objective management module 714 and other self management modules to the event manager 201A.

Through the event manager 201A, the subcomponent modules of the self management component 110 can be

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accessed as needed while using other components of the system. For example, the opportunity management module 704 can be accessed by the salesperson to assist in the time-consuming tasks of prioritizing opportunities, managing the sales process, communicating results, forecasting, reviewing progress, managing customer information and analyzing markets. As an integrated system, each of these task may be used as needed to effectively self manage the salesperson's time. Due to integration with the sales management component 112, the information can also be reviewed by the sales management team to help monitor the sales process and ensure that objectives are met.

a Each of the subcomponent modules of the self management component 110 ~~are~~<sup>is</sup> optimized for use with other modules of the sales system. The self management component is used by the salesperson to manage opportunities, objectives, territory information, contacts, accounts, schedules, goals and tasks. The self management module performs interactively with each of the other components, for example, with the time with customer and order management components to recognize events and process information without requiring reentry by the salesperson. The self management component further supports team selling, workgroups and workflow environments. It further provides an intuitive solution for managing account relationships, opportunities and sales processes and information management. A flexible data architecture is used which allows information to be presented the way the user needs the information for a particular opportunity. Direct integration with word processing software is provided to develop correspondence, access templates and create unique reports. The self management component also supports e-mail and fax functions for the rapid distribution of information and correspondence to customers. By way of

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example, various subcomponent modules of the self management component are described below.

5 The contact management module 702 is provided to assist the salesperson in receiving, sending, creating, maintaining and managing information related to contacts and organizations (e.g. companies, groups, firms, etc.). The contact management module utilizes a relational data architecture which supports the ability to track and manage unique relationships of contacts, channels, and organizations. A user interface which provides rapid access to account and contact information is incorporated into the contact management module 702. An integrated communication facility provides the ability to receive leads from other data sources such as telemarketing (i.e. 10 from the lead generation component 102) and other workgroups. The contact and organization information, as updated using the contact manager module 702, is utilized by other components to avoid reentry by the user. Information shared by the back office system 200 and 15 enterprise system 209 provides account specific historical data. The system is further customizable by the salesperson providing user-definable fields that allow personal tailoring of information managed in the module. 20

25 A time management module 711 is also provided in the self management component 100. The time management module 711 allows the user to manage their schedule and tasks. Integration of the time management module with other modules and components of the system allows the system to enhance the salesperson's ability to manage multiple tasks and events. Activated process steps in the objective 30 management module 714 (described below) are automatically scheduled for action in the time management module 711. The time management module supports multiple calendar views including daily, weekly, monthly views. A user interface 35 having the ability to drag and drop tasks to a date for

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scheduling is provided. The time management module also provides direct integration with an e-mail system to receive or send group scheduling, requests and meeting arrangements. A task management subcomponent of the time management module 711 provides the capability to implement group tasks by project, priority, account and dates.

An objective management module 714 allows the salesperson to assign a process (i.e. a series of steps) to a given sales objective. The objective management module 714 provides a structured sales process for the salesperson by integrating the best knowledge and expertise of an organization's best selling strategies. The salesperson is able to view guidelines and recommendations for each step and recommendations to overcome possible obstacles to move a prospect through a sales cycle. Critical sales information and opportunity status is communicated between the sales personnel and management by the integration of the objective management module of the self management component 110 and the sales management component 112.

Using the objective management module 714 sales process steps and guidelines may be uniquely developed for each type of sales opportunity. The module may include a checklist feature that allows the user to utilize forms and lists to gather a uniform set of information needed for each opportunity or account profile. The salesperson may customize or insert additional process steps for a given opportunity. The system may automatically calculate the probability of closing the sale with the date and value of each opportunity and process and consider both the sales status and the customer's buying status. The integration with other components of the system, allow the salesperson to quickly access opportunity, activity and value. The integrated automated support of opportunity management is facilitated by recognition of key opportunity events such as proposal creation and order entry via the event manager



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201A, or automatically initiate other actions within the system.

5 A forecasting module 710 is also provided within the self management component 110. The forecasting module 710 provides functional and product forecast information to the salesperson related to sales, revenue, commission and profit sorted by accounts or products identified in the sort criteria. The forecasting capability provides information to the salesperson to enhance planning and prioritization of efforts. Integration with the sales system allows the forecasting module 710 to present information based on model, components, customer, time, and other criteria.

10 The forecasting module 710 also provides the salesperson with automatic reporting capabilities including win-loss ratios, actual versus goals, commissions, and period-to-date status. Opportunity status may be presented on a system calculated or a user estimated basis. The module utilizes data for closed sales, data for opportunities with a stated prediction of close, or data for a combination of both as received from other components of the system to generate forecast reports. The module produces graphical and tabular displays of reported information. Forecast related data is made available for use by enterprise information management systems by the forecast module.

15 Fig. 8, illustrates the subcomponent modules of the training component 114. The training component 114 includes a system training module 802, a product training module 804, a skills training module 806, etc. The completely integrated system allows salespersons to sell and train with the same system. The integrated on-line training, using the same system as the salesperson uses in the field eliminates traditional expensive classroom training and provides. Moreover, the combination of the

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subcomponent modules, facilitates integrated sales training in three key areas: product knowledge, sales skills and system usage. The integration also allows the salespeople to follow a self-paced routine to build their expertise using live data and functionality.

Each of the training modules 802, 804 and 806 are computer based training modules which present pre-built computer-based training courses to the user and which gather completion data for training administration and status reporting. The modules access, reformat and present product data from the common database. Data can include, for example, specifications, graphics, multimedia and competitive information. The ability of the computer-based training to access the actual working modules of the sales system provide a familiar working interface to the user. The training component 102 is further supported by a training administration module 810, a training management module 812, and a certification module 814. The training management module 812, illustrated in Fig. 8, will typically reside in the sales management component 112 of the system. The training management module is used by the system to report, monitor and coach the salesperson during training. Training events carried out by the salesperson are recognized by the event manager 201A, and provided to the training management module 812.

As described above, the training component 114 is integrated to the other components of the sales system to provide a common user interface and a common platform for training and selling. Common data and media (graphics, video, etc.) utilization with the time with customer component 104 provide common reference material and reduce local storage requirements. The training administration module 810, typically provided when in the self management component 110, is further integrated to allow the user to manage their own training and self-improvement

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requirements. Integrated with the modules of the time with customer component 104, the certification module 814 certifies salesperson for use of the system for particular products lines or data and can require certain pre-determined levels of competency before access to the modules within the time with customer component 104 is granted.

The training administration module 810 provides an overview of the user's employee development requirements (i.e., required training events), the associated certification tests and the recommended sequence of progression. This module controls access to the user's individual training events based upon prerequisites and the individual's completion of those prerequisites as determined by the certification tests carried out in the certification module 814. It also provides a link to the training and test engine of the system.

The training administration module 810 is integrated with the objective management module 714 of the self management component 110. In this manner, the module allows the assignment and tracking of personal training objectives and schedules. The training administration module 810 identifies both required and optional training events which may be driven by the salesperson's actual usage of the system. The system may automatically notify the user of scheduled training events or performance evaluations and will automatically update the user's time management module 711 of the self management component 110.

The certification testing module 814 presents skill or knowledge certification tests to the user, scores responses, provides review or remediation suggestions, and gathers the necessary information used for training administration and reporting. The knowledge tests generated by the certification module 814 are computer-generated multiple choice, matching or true/false

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questions or end user completion. The module calculates the score, records the results and provides feedback to the user. Skills tests are performance checklists to be completed and updated by the supervisor or evaluator.

5 Thus, the certification module 814 supports evaluation of skill areas where written tests would not adequately measure proficiency.

Fig. 9 illustrates the sales management component 112B connected to the event manager 112B. As illustrated, the

10 sales management component 112B is comprised of modules that are optimized for use with other modules of the sales system. Typically, a sales manager has responsibility for both management of sales personnel and direct sales accountability for certain clients. In this fashion, the

15 sales manager component 112B is an integrated component of the sales manager's sales system. As described above, when the sales manager is located at the home office, the sales manager component 112B is located in the back office system. Alternatively, if the sales manager is mobile, the

20 sales manager component will be located in the salesperson support system 100. The functionality, however, remains substantially the same. The sales manager module 902 of the sales manager component 112B is used by the sales manager to forecast, coach, plan performance, assign tasks,

25 review territories, handle commissions, assign task capabilities, etc. The fully integrated system also provides a common platform between the sales personnel and the sales management personnel to enhance communication and reduce redundant or administrative activities. The system

30 is integrated to permit the sales manager access to the salesperson's usage of the system and further provides objective feedback on the status of sales, performance, goals and other events. It further provides the sales manager with the ability to coach and monitor activities of

35 sales people and enhances the ability to forecast sales and

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related information such as product requirements, product mix, revenue and profit, commissions, pipeline status, etc.

Fig. 10 illustrates an embodiment of the data component 116 including data components 116A and 116B. As  
5 illustrated in Fig. 10, the data component 116A includes a data manager 1050 connected to the event manager 201A. The data component 116A also includes a number of local storage area groups made up of various databases. The storage area groups are divided into a manufacturer storage group 1010,  
10 and international storage group 1020, a locale storage group 1030 and a salesperson group 1040. The various storage groups may be all stored in a single large memory file or may be in separate memory files.

The manufacture storage group 1010 includes a services  
15 database 1011, a testimonials database 1012, an order requirements database 1013, a financial database 1014, a template of proposals and presentation database 1015, a product information database 1016 and a configuration database 1017. Each of these databases support the  
20 operation of one or more subcomponent modules of the above described components in the salesperson support system 100. For example, the financial database 1014 includes up-to-date finance and lease rates, terms and incentives. The product information database 1016 includes data related to  
25 the features and benefits of a product, the specifications for the product or service being sold, comparative specifications, etc. The configuration database 1017 includes data related to a base model, for example, standard equipment, options, prices, weights,  
30 characteristics and relationships of the product.

The international storage group 1020 allows the integrated sales system to be used world wide. The international storage group 1020 includes databases for screens, menus and print text in various languages 1021,

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country-supplied products 1022, country rules, currencies, etc., 1023.

5       The locale storage group 1030, includes databases for locale rules 1031, templates of proposals and presentations 1032, locally-supplied products and services 1033 and archive 1034.

10       The salesperson storage group 1040 maintains databases for the salesperson. For example, databases for generated presentations and proposals 1041, orders 1042, contacts, calendar and to-do items 1043, customers, leads and other names 1044, are provided.

15       The local storage database of data component 116A is optimized for the mobile, disconnected sales environment. Data is optimized to assure security, fast response time, and to provide as much information as possible without requiring the user to "connect" to the global storage of data component 116B of the back office system 200 described more fully below. All components and subcomponent modules of the salesperson support system 100 use a common data architecture.

20       The data component 116B contains global storage databases divided into a number of storage area groups. A data manager 1090 is connected to the event manager 201B via respective APIs. A manufacturer storage group 1060 stores global information corresponding to the manufacturer storage group of the data component 116A. As described more fully below, the information in the global storage of the data component 116B can be updated using the data tools. The updated data will subsequently be communicated to the salesperson support system 100 to update the local storage of the data component 116A.

30       The data component 116B also contains an international storage group 1080, having databases corresponding to the international storage group 1020 of the data component 116A. An administration storage group 1070 is also

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a provided in the data component 116B. This group includes an account data database 1071 and a release data database. The event <sup>managers</sup>~~managers~~ 201A and 201B, date mangers 1050 and 1090, facilitate a proper exchange of data between the local storage of date component 116A and the global storage of the data component 116B.

It is noted that the date in the data component 116B of the back office system is stored in an open database format (e.g., ODBC) to provide maximum compatibility with different systems. This facilitates the importation of data from other enterprise system databases for use by the system 20. It further provides for maximum usability of the data. Such open databases, however, require large amounts of storage space. Thus, a data optimizer is provided in the data tools subsystem 205 of the back office system 200 (Fig. 2), to convert the data into a run time product knowledge database. The optimized database is tuned for speed, size and security. When data is transferred from the data component 116B to the data component 116A, it is first optimized. The databases of the data component 116A store information in the optimized format. Thus, the storage requirements are minimized and the transfer time is reduced.

Fig. 11 illustrates the subcomponent modules of the communications components 118A and 118B. The communications components 118A and 118B have respective communications managers 1101A and 1101B and query managers 1102A and 1102B. The communications managers 1101A and 1101B handle communications from the salesperson support system 100 to the back office system 200 including orders, change orders, mail etc. Further communications from the back office system 200 to the salesperson support system 100 are handled by the communications managers 1101A and 1101B. These communications include data updates, product information, leads, incentives, mail, system updates, etc.

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Thus, the communications managers 1101A and 1101B must have the ability to receive incoming information and to process outgoing information.

5       The query managers 1102A and 1102B communications between the two systems related to inquiries. For example, the query managers handle communication of information related to inventory inquiries, order inquiries, price inquiries, etc.

10       The communications components 118A and 118B also include respective communication equipment 1103A and 1103B. The communication equipment communicatively couple the two systems as illustrated by the dotted line 1104. The equipment may include network connections and lines, modems, satellite communications technology, etc.

15       Communication between the two systems is controlled using the event managers 210A and 201B and the communication managers 1101A and 1101B and query managers 1102A and 1102B.

20       Fig. 12 illustrates in greater detail the data tools subsystem 205 of the back office system 200. As illustrated in Fig. 12, the data tool subsystem 205 includes a number of data tools used to edit and maintain the data. The data tools include a configuration data tool 1202, a specifications and comparison data tool 1204, a

25       graphics and feature information data tool 1206, a customer and leads data tool 1208, a sales processes data tool 1210, a programs and incentives data tool 1212, a services dated tool 1214, an inventory data tool 1216, a finance parameters data tool 1218, a quote terms and conditions

30       data tool 1220, and a training management data tool 1222.

35       The configuration data tool 1202 allows data maintenance personnel to create, edit and update the configuration portions of the knowledge database. The configuration data tool 1202 includes an editor, allowing the user to create and edit the database, including



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international portions of the database. The configuration data tool 1202 may be used to carry out such functions as data modeling, data editing, auditing, security, and internationalization. The configuration data tool may also  
5 be provided with interfacing capability to be used with a data pre-processor to incorporate data from other electronic sources. A data optimizer is used to place the data in the optimized, encrypted run time format.

The specifications and comparison data tool 1204 allows  
10 the data maintenance personnel to create, edit and update the specifications for the products, as well as specifications of competitor's products. This data is also stored in the knowledge database. Like the configuration data tool 1202, the specifications and comparison data tool  
15 1204 includes an editor allowing a back office user to create and edit the database including, international portions of the database. The tool can also be used in conjunction with the data pre-processor to incorporate data from other electronic sources. As with the configuration  
20 data tool 1202, the specifications and comparison data tool uses the data optimizer to place the data in the optimized run time, encrypted format. The tool may also include data auditing and security functionality.

The graphics and features data tool 1206 is provided to  
25 assist data maintenance personnel in creating, editing, updating and adding text to graphics screens. The resultant data is stored in the knowledge database. The tool includes an editor which allows users to create and edit the textual portions of graphics screens. The  
30 graphics and features tool 1206 may be used in conjunction with a scanning device and/or graphic creation and drawing tools to create graphic images. The tool creates the run time database.

The customer and leads data tool 1208 allows back  
35 office personnel to maintain and control the data entities

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and relationships required for the contact management module 702, provided in the self management component 110. The tool includes import and export capabilities enabling the system to process information to and from other  
5 enterprise databases such as telemarketing, customer services, warranty, and management information systems. In this manner, leads can be passed from these other entities directly to the salesperson through the customer and leads data tool 1208.

10 The sales processes data tool 1210 is provided to create, edit and maintain data elements used to support the objective management module in the self management component of the salesperson support system 100. This tool is used to identify steps and scheduling for processes,  
15 develop guidelines for these steps, create checklists for consistent data collection, and enter required follow-up requirements. In addition, a data and formula matrix used to calculate probability of closing a sales opportunities is provided within the sales processes tool 1210.

20 The finance parameter data tool 1218 is used to maintain the values, plans and defaults for credit and finance information used by the finance module of the time with customer component of the system. The finance parameter tool 1218 allows maintenance personnel to add or  
25 edit interest rates, set finance and lease plan requirements and parameters, control plan and option availability, establish report requirements and set finance plan valid dates.

30 The quote terms and conditions data tool 1220 is provided to allow back office system 200 maintenance personnel to control and maintain the terms and conditions used by the quotation module of the time with component system. Tax requirements, special fees, discounts and profitability calculations may be set using this tool.

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5 The other data tools are similar in construction and provide similar functionality to those described in greater detail above. Each of the data tools are connected to the event manager 201B, which handles the flow of information throughout the system.

10 Fig. 13 illustrates in greater detail the system tools subsystem 207 of the back office system 200. The system tools subsystem 207 of the back office system 200 includes a screens and interface subcomponent module 1302 and a report and templates subcomponent module 1304. The screens and interface module 1302 is used by back office personnel to modify the language or terminology of the screen elements such as controls, buttons, menus, field labels, etc. International language selection can be supported with this tool to provide a sales system usable by salespeople in different languages. The reports and templates module 1304 is provided to modify and create a sales system report format and content. The module may also be used to create and modify proposal templates. Each of the modules are connected to the event manager 201B as illustrated.

25 Fig. 14 illustrates in greater detail the enterprise system subsystem 209 of the back office system 200. The enterprise subsystem 209 of the back office system 200 is made up of a number of databases and a number of data managers. The system includes a manufacturing system database 1401, a pricing database 1403, an inventory database 1405, a customer database 1407, other legacy system databases 1409 and marketing databases 1411. An out box data manager 1402 manages data output from the databases of the enterprise system 209 and supplies the output information to the event manager 201B. An in box data manager 1404 receives data from the event manager 201 and stores the data in the appropriate database of the enterprise system 209. An enterprise massaging system

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manager 1406 is provided to communicate information between the event manager 201B and the various databases of the enterprise system 209.

5 Figs. 15A-F illustrate in table form an example of how data may be organized in the local information storage databases of the data component 116 of the salesperson support system 100 and the back office system 200. The routing of data, proper classification of data, etc., is controlled by the event manager 201.

10 In the tables, the various types of information stored and used by the sales system is listed by category. For example, Fig. 15A illustrates the types of customer information typically gathered and used during the sales process. Also illustrated in the tables are the various  
15 core components 103 of the salesperson support system 100 and the support process components 105. Exemplary subcomponent modules are also illustrated for the various components. The table illustrates how each of the subcomponent modules, under control of the event manager  
20 201 are granted access to the particular types of data. Subcomponent modules marked with a "+" symbol have access to the corresponding data for both read and write purposes. Subcomponent modules marked with a "#" symbol have read only access to the corresponding data. Subcomponent  
25 modules left blank do not have access to the data.

As illustrated in Figs. 15A-15F, the data may be used commonly by more than one of the various components and subcomponent modules. In this manner, the components and modules are integrated together for a common exchange of  
30 information via the event manager 201. As illustrated, data stored in a single location is used by the various components and subcomponent modules during different phase of the overall sales process. It is can also be appreciated from the tables of Figs. 15A-15F that data  
35 which is updated using one module will be automatically

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reflected in other modules which rely on the particular data. In this manner, the salesperson can be confident that the most recent data is being used since regardless of when in the sales process the data is changed it will be automatically reflected in each component which relies on the data.

By way of example, a salesperson meeting with a current customer may learn that the customer has moved to a new address. Using the self management component 110, the salesperson enters the new address information into the customer information database. The event manager 201A recognizes this event. If the customer currently has an order not yet delivered when the data is updated in the common database, the event manager 201A instructs the order management component 106 to automatically reflect the change. Alternatively, the event manager 201A can be used to prompt the salesperson that the data which is being updated is being used or relied upon by another component of the sales system. The salesperson can confirm that the updated information should be used in other parts of the system. For example, the system will inquire under control of the event manager whether the change in address requires a change in the delivery address for an order. If the new address should be used for the delivery, the change order subcomponent module 506 is initiated with the new information reflected and a command is given to update the delivery address information in the order. Thus, the order will now reflect the proper address information ensuring proper delivery.

Fig. 15C illustrates another example of how the fully integrated sales system uses the common exchange of information to facilitate the overall sales process. Using the self management component 110, the salesperson generates a forecast with the forecasting subcomponent module for the upcoming year. The forecasting module

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5 accesses information generated with the quote module to prepare quotes for customers, such as unit quantity, quoted price and discount description, thereby basing the forecast on the most recent quotes which the salesperson has prepared.

10 Fig. 16-18 are flow charts illustrating the operation of the above described embodiment of the invention. Referring to Fig. 16, the operation of the system when used to generate a proposal will be described. At step S101, the salesperson using the salesperson support system 100  
15 accesses or generates customer information for a proposal. The system may invoke the contact module 702 of the self management component 110 and retrieve data from the salesperson storage group 1040.

20 At step S102, the product module 402 of the time with customer component 104 (Fig. 4) is used to tag features and benefits, as well as competitive information for the proposal to be generated.

25 At step S103, the configuration module 406 of the time with customer component 104 is used to create a customer solution. As described above, the configuration may previously have been created and the information residing therein may automatically be used at this step to generate a customer proposal. At step S104, the quote module 408, finance module 410, and any other needed modules are  
30 accessed and used to prepare all of the desired information to be included in the proposal. At step S105, certain selections of the proposal may be edited as permitted by the locale rules database 103. Only certain users of the system may be validated for such an operation. If the user is not validated, step S105 is skipped and the system proceeds directly from step S104 to step S106. At step S106, the system automatically creates, prints and saves a proposal using the information generated using the various  
35 subcomponent modules described above.

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At step S107, the event manager 201A recognizes the proposal generation event and instructs the opportunity and forecast modules of the self management component 110 to update opportunity and forecast status to reflect the newly created proposal. Upon completion of the update, step S108, the updated opportunity status is transmitted to the back office system 200. It is noted that the salesperson support system 100 may be operated disconnected from the back office system 200. In this instance, the data is placed in the out box of the communication component 118A and is automatically transmitted at the next connected session with the back office system 200.

At step S109, the back office system 200 receives the updated opportunity status information at the communication manager in the communication component 118B. This information is transferred via the event manager 201A to the sales manager module of the sales management component 112B and is reflected in the database component 118B. At step S110, the sales management forecasts are now properly updated to reflect the proposal created using the salesperson support system 100.

Upon completion of step S110, the operation of the proposal generation is ended.

Fig. 17 illustrates the use of the system 20 (Fig. 2) during the order submission process. At step S201, an order process is initiated by the salesperson. If not, a message will be provided to the salesperson, otherwise the system proceeds to step S202. At step S202, the system checks order requirements by accessing the order requirements database 1013 of the manufacturer storage group 1010 via the event manager 201A and the data manager 1050 (Fig. 10). The system then accesses the presentations and proposals database 1041 of the data component 116A to retrieve a configuration of the system to be ordered.

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At step S204, the event manager 201A creates a work session file which is used to manage information related to the order. At step S205, the system automatically accesses the configuration module 406 to create or modify the configuration as needed.

At step S206, the system accesses the customer module to complete customer information as needed.

At step S207, the system prompts the user to enter any additional order information needed such as quantity, "ship to", "bill to" and special instructions.

The system then checks user status by referring to the locale rules database 1031 at step S208 to confirm that the user is granted valid access to submit an order. Assuming the user has access, the system proceeds to step S209 and transfers the order from the event manager 201A to the out box of the communications component 118A via the communication manager 1101A.

The event manager 201A recognizes the order submittal process and initiates a series of automatic steps. At step S210, the system stores a record of the order in the orders database 1042. At step S211, the system automatically updates the opportunity status of the opportunity module 704 of the self management component 110. At step S112, the to do module 708 of the self management component 110 is accessed by the system and follow-up items are automatically added to the salespersons to-do list. Because the self management component 110 is fully integrated via the intelligent event manager 201A to the order management component 106, the system automatically creates the follow-up to do list and updates the opportunity status without requirement of any further interaction with the user.

At step S213, the system transmits the order to the back office system 200 via the communications component 118A out box at the next connected session. At step S214,

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the communication manager 1101B of the communication component 118B receives the order from the communication equipment 1103B. The communication manager notifies the information to the event manager 201B of the back office system 200. At step S215, the event manager transfers the order information to the enterprise system 209. The system also updates the sales management forecast in the sales management component 112B to reflect the order at step S216.

At step S217, the enterprise system notifies the communication manager out box, via the event manager 201B, of an order acknowledgment which is transmitted to the sales representative. At step S218, the salesperson is notified of the acknowledgment. Upon completion of step S218, the order submission process is complete.

Fig. 18 illustrates the process flow for a price information update operation. At step S301, pricing information is updated in the system. The pricing information may be updated using the configuration data tool of the data tools subsystem 305(?) or may be received from the pricing database of the enterprise system. At step S302, the price change is transferred to the global information storage of data component 118B. The updated data is also transferred via the event manager 201B to the communication manager of the communications component 118B.

At step S304, the system accesses the account data database 1071 of the data component 116B and checks the user data file for replication instructions. The price data is transferred at the next connect session at step S305.

At step S306, the updated price information is received by the communication manager of the communication component 118B. At step S307, the system updates the price file and marks old information as invalid in the configuration database of the data component 116A. The system also

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leaves an audit trail message in the out box of the communication component 118A for transfer to the back office system during the next connected session at step S308.

5        Finally, at step S309, the system may be used to automatically notify the salesperson of any outstanding quotes which are affected by the price change. Upon completion of step S309, the process ends.

10        As described above, each event occurring in the sales process is handled by an event manager which recognizes the event, notes the context in which the event occurs and automatically initiates additional action based on the event and its context. The operation of the event manager will be better understood by reference to the exemplary  
15        embodiments described below. These embodiments are provided by way of illustration, and not limitation, to demonstrate how the various types of information made available during the sales process can be used by an automated sales system to facilitate the sales process.

20        As described above, object oriented programming (OOP) may be used to implement the various subsystems. In such an implementation, the functionality of the various modules and subsystems may be implemented in the form of business objects. In such an implementation, the business objects  
25        can be the focal point of behavior in an OOP based sales system. For example, the business objects can trap application events (which represent actions by the user) and apply a set of behavior rules to the application events. A typical business object may provide or receive  
30        information to or from a user through the occurrence of an application event.

Application events in the disclosed embodiment are internal to the sales system and generally represent a sales event occurring in the sales process. In other  
35        words, a sales event may be an event in the sales process,

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typically occurring between the salesperson and the customer, while an application event may be an internal operation of the sales system (i.e., the operation of the software and hardware making up the sales system) which is used to electronically facilitate the sales event. In such a system, the occurrence of a sales event can be made known to the sales system by the occurrence of an application event. For example, the generation of a proposal for a customer is a sales event which occurs in the time with customer phase of the sales process. When the sales system is used to generate the proposal, a business object of the proposal generation module in the time with customer component typically will be used by the system. As described more fully below, such use of this business object will inform the sales system that the generation of a proposal has just occurred in the sales process. This information may then be used by the sales system to facilitate (or initiate) specified application events, which in turn drive sales events (e.g., to enter tasks into a to-do list for actions to be taken by the salesperson or to automatically carry out a task in the sales process).

As can be appreciated, in many instances a sales event and its related application event may be used interchangeably to describe an event. In the discussion below, where a distinction between the two types of events is useful, the terms sales event and application event are used. Where the discussion applies more generally to both types of events the term event may be used in a more generic form.

Fig. 19 illustrates an exemplary embodiment of an event manager 201. The event manager shown includes an event managing unit 1902 coupled to an event manager rules database 1904. An editor 1906, which is shown coupled to the event manager, rules database 1904 and may be used to alter the contents of the event manager rules database

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1904. The event manager rules database 1904 may also be viewed via a monitoring unit 1908, which typically is configured to provide for an administrative view of the event information. Also in Fig. 19, a business object  
5 1908, a data object 1910 and a container 1912 are shown for purposes of illustrating the operation of the event manager 201.

In one embodiment, a system using an event manager as depicted in Fig. 19 is implemented in a layered  
10 architecture. An exemplary layered architecture is illustrated in Fig. 20. The layered architecture enables developers to change areas of the system without impacting areas outside the defined areas. The system shown has four layers; the platform layer 2002 (typically including  
15 operating systems, networks, peripherals, etc.), the data layer 2004, the business objects layer 2006 and the application layer 2008. In the embodiment illustrated, the layers communicate with each other through three defined protocols illustrated as protocol layers 2001, 2003 and  
20 2005 between the platform layer 2002 and the data layer 2004, the data layer 2004 and the business objects layer 2006, the business objects layer 2006 and the application layer 2008, respectively.

The third protocol layer 2005 may be used to implement  
25 the intelligent operation of the system by establishing the interaction of events and actions between objects and applications as well as between objects themselves. In other words, events may be tied (or paired) together in the third protocol layer 2005. When one event occurs on this  
30 level (e.g., the generation of a proposal in the proposal generation module), the system automatically recognizes the event, and its significance and may automatically initiate another event in the sales process (e.g., scheduling a follow-up in the time management module) on the third  
35 protocol layer 2005. In other words, the third protocol

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a layer 2005 can be the layer on which <sup>pairing</sup>~~paring~~ (or grouping) of application events occurs. However, as described more fully below, the grouping operation of the event manager depicted in Fig. 19 typically is driven on the basis of data. In this matter, the pairing or grouping of events may be considered as occurring on the second protocol layer 2003.

10 In the embodiment shown, the second protocol layer 2003 provides for communication within the system. As described above, the system may be implemented using distributed technology. Typical communication within such a system may be abstracted into four basic types: (1) Distribution; (2) Replication; (3) Transaction; and (4) Messaging. Communication on this protocol layer now will be briefly described.

15 Distribution generally refers to and includes en mass file copying. This would include general functions such as copy, move, create, delete, and the like. The distributed files and information types can be maintained in a number of different ways. For example, a version number may be used. Each file may be assigned a version number which changes when the content is changed. The distributed files can also be updated with changes which occur only in the system and not in the complete file. This type of change may be termed a net change. Files and information types can also be maintained with tokens. A token is set valid for a given period of time for a given user. This may also be used as a security mechanism of the system as well.

20 Replication may be used when a user does not need the entire set of information contained in a given source. Used in this manner, replication enables a user to receive relevant information only. This reduces the amount of information that is transferred during maintenance.

25 A Transaction operation may be used for information support. It typically includes functions such as insert,

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delete, select (query), post, commit, etc. This type of operation generally is more efficient when handling tabular information.

5 The Messaging function may be used to enable workflow in the system, such as by enabling the business objects to communicate state and status information with each other. For example, messaging operations may include post route, send, broadcast, receive, listen, etc.

10 Typical operation of the event manager 201 will now be described. In the disclosed embodiment, upon the occurrence of an application event using the business object 1908, the business object 1908 exposes 1914, the event and associated event handlers to the event managing unit 1904, and the information contained in the exposed  
15 event is used to by the event managing unit 1902 to create or update a database in the event manager database 1904. On the basis of rules and state information stored in the event manager database 1904, the event managing unit 1902 may be configured to dynamically bind event handlers (in  
20 the form of an event map) to the exposed events (as represented by line 1916). The event handlers typically dictate further action to be taken by the system resulting from the occurrence of the particular sales event represented by the business object 1908.

25 As described above, a typical business object may provide or receive information to or from the user. The information may be taken from or put to a data object 1910 with the data objects stored in a container 1912. The container 1912 may be a special business object such as a  
30 repository for data objects that may or may not be operated on by the business object 1908.

In the embodiment described above, the event manager automatically binds a sales event to one or more other sales events as directed by the rules and other information  
35 in the event manager database 1904. The rules may

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prescribe that on the occurrence of a particular event, an event record is examined in the event manager database to determine if other related events have occurred, and if the other events have occurred, the rules may indicate that another sales event should be initiated.

By way of example, a sales event such as the introduction of a new incentive program for a specified product may occur. A business object associated with handling incentive programs may be used to update data related to incentive information in the system. The event manager may automatically recognize a change in the incentive program for the specified product, check to see if there are outstanding proposals for the specified product, and if so, direct a business object in the self management component to automatically generate a letter informing the customer of the new incentive program.

Further intelligence may be provided in the system to evaluate the context in which the sales event occurs (e.g., the significance of other information in the system). In the above example, the event manager may also check customer information, and determine whether the new incentive fits the customer profile. For example, the customer may have indicated a maximum down payment available to the customer. If the incentive program calls for a higher down payment, then a decision may be made that the incentive program need not be sent to the customer. In this manner, the context in which the sales event occurs (e.g., whether outstanding proposals exists, whether the incentive is inconsistent with customer profile information) may be used in connection with the occurrence of the event to determine what if any subsequent action should be taken by the system.

In the manner described above, different events may be paired (or grouped) together. In Figs. 21A-21G, a table provides examples of how sales events may be linked

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together by the event manager database. In Figs. 21A-21G, exemplary events are listed in column 2102. The exemplary components and related modules used to facilitate the sales events are listed in columns 2101 and 2103. In column 2104, examples are provided illustrating how a rules database in the event manager database 1904 may link the sales events to other sales events facilitated by the system. The provided examples are not exhaustive, but rather illustrate different types of events that may be paired to facilitate the sales process.

Referring again to Fig. 19, the rules applied by the event managing unit 1902 can be manually entered into the event manager data base 1904 using the editor 1906. In this manner, the operation of the system in response to a particular event can be altered by changing the information in the event manager database without altering the business objects used by the system. In other words, the subsequent automatic operations carried out by the system are driven by the contents of the event manager database 1904. This allows the system to be highly customizable without requiring extensive reprogramming of the business objects used to facilitate sales events. If desired, changes in the rules database may be made transparent to the business objects.

Fig. 22 illustrates an alternative embodiment which incorporates an expert system 2002 which allows the system to learn successful sales approaches and automatically implement such approaches in future sales process. For example, the expert sales system may be programmed to monitor the sales processes for desired (successful) sales events. These events may include, for example, a customer purchase of a product, a repeat sale to a customer, a large number of leads being qualified to potential customer, and the like. These events represent successes in the sales process. When a successful event

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occurs, the system preferably identifies the events or actions leading to the desired outcome. The expert system may then dynamically alter the rules in the event manger database 1904 to automatically initiate (or set different values for) the identified events or actions in similar subsequent sales activity.

The expert system 2002 may monitor a large number of successful events and determine the common characteristics of the events and actions leading to successful events and then change the rules on the basis of this experience. In this manner, the expert sales system allows the entire sales force to pool knowledge and experience such that the entire sales force gains from the shared experience. This allows the successful tactics of experienced salespeople to be provided as defaults for inexperienced salespeople. This also allows a generic sales system to be used in a particular sales environment or in a geographic region and to learn successful default operations to maximize the sales opportunities.

The expert system 2002, may also be implemented to predict the most successful course of action based on the information available to the system at the time a sales event occurs. For example, an inference engine may be incorporated into the expert system 2002 to select an appropriate course of action to be taken when prior events of interest suggest different, conflicting courses of action. Consider the above example, where a new incentive program is introduced. In addition to the previously described information, the system may have a vast amount of knowledge (or information) which may be useful to determine the best course of action. For example, based on prior experience, it may determined that customers in the particular customer's geographic region typically participate in the type of incentive program offered. This would suggest that it would be advisable to make

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appropriate offers, such as by sending out a letter. The system may also contain a record indicating similar incentive programs being rejected by the particular customer a number of times in the past. This would  
 5 indicate that it might be better to leave the customer to consider the current outstanding proposal.

Such facts related to the event may be taken into consideration by an experienced salesperson to determine if and how the new incentive program should be presented to a  
 10 particular customer. As can be appreciated, a large number of pieces of information available in the sales system may each be related to whether a subsequent action (e.g., sending out a letter) should be initiated. All of the potential scenarios in which the fact patterns may be  
 15 developed may make it extremely difficult to code specific rules for making such a decision. Thus, in accordance with one embodiment of the system, an inference engine may be employed to make the decision of whether particular subsequent action should be taken.

20 A typical inference engine relies upon a number of independent rules which may be conceptualized as a number of statements in the form IF X THEN Y. In the above example, these rules may be of the from:

25 IF proposal exists for product THEN send letter;  
 IF insufficient down payment THEN no letter;  
 IF location is Midwest THEN send letter;  
 \* \* \*  
 IF prior rejection THEN no letter.

30 In its most simple form, the inference engine may determine whether more rules indicate that a letter should be sent or not. The different rules could also be weighted to provide a heavier influence by some of the rules on the outcome. Moreover, the rules may be more complex such as

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IF X AND Z THEN Y. The above example is provided as a simplified illustration of the general operation of an expert system using an inference engine in the system of Fig. 22.

5 It is noted that such an expert system may be developed by generating rules based on the knowledge and experience of the most experienced salespeople. Then, a relatively inexperienced salesperson can use the system to facilitate a sale by automatically identifying events that suggest  
10 further action and by suggesting a best course of action based on the outcome of the rules. It is further noted that the rules used (e.g., in the inference engine) may examine vast amounts of information gathered during the sales process to suggest or initiate action. The volume of  
15 information available and considered may far exceed the amount of information that even an experienced salesperson would be capable of examining. Moreover, the system may be implemented so that information is automatically reviewed, eliminating the need to identify which information may be  
20 relevant each time the situation arises. Also, the time which would otherwise be spent retrieving and reviewing the information is now made available to the salesperson for other more productive activities.

It is also noted that, in dealing with additional  
25 customers, the rules used by an expert system employing an inference engine may be derived from actual experience. Successful tactics may be remembered by the system and used to drive the THEN statement for a particular set of facts.

The advantages of using the intelligence of an expert  
30 system extends across the various phases of the sales process. For example, the system can track customer profile information as it is gathered during the presales phase of the sales process and can correlate that to whether a sale is made by examining activities in the order  
35 management phase of the sales process. In this manner, the

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system may intelligently leverage such information to glean which types of presentations and proposals are effective with the particular customer profile and set this information as a default for the system whenever a similar customer profile is associated with a customer for which a presentation or proposal is being prepared. During the configuration process, specific types of information may be automatically tagged for inclusion in a presentation or proposal on the basis of the particular customer's profile. The intelligent ability to alter defaults for the system on the basis of the customer profile enhances the likelihood of a sale and reduces the workload of the salesperson.

Another example of using the knowledge base of the system is in generation of forecasts. The system may continually evaluate and track events and actions which predict outcome. Upon occurrence of a particular event or set of events, the system can dynamically update the probability of sale.

Fig. 23 illustrates the general interaction of an expert sales system through various phases of the sales process. Four general phases of the sales process, (e.g., the lead generation phase 2301, the time with customer phase 2305, the order management phase 2306 and the customer retention phase 2307) are illustrate in Fig. 23. The lead generation phase 2301 includes three sub-phases which correspond to a salesperson receiving a lead (suspect) 2302, determining whether the lead can use the product to be sold (qualify) 2303, and generating a qualified lead (prospect) 2304.

An intelligent system 2312 typically interacts with each phase of the sales process as illustrated in Fig. 23. Such an intelligent system generally includes a knowledge database 2308, plus logic 2309 to realize the implication of the knowledge and logic to strategize 2310 based on the realized implication. As diagrammatically illustrated in

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Fig. 23, such a system will gather knowledge by monitoring the operation of the system in the various phases of the sales process (i.e., knowledge is gathered as the automated sales system is used to facilitate the sales process).

5 Thus, the knowledge database 3208 may include information prior sales experience using the sales system and successful strategies employed in the prior uses. The gathered knowledge, as realized and strategized, is then used by the system to impact the overall sales process.

10 The foregoing description, which has been disclosed by way of the above examples and discussion, addresses embodiments of the present invention encompassing the principles of the present invention. The embodiments may be changed, modified and/or implemented using various types  
15 of arrangements. Those skilled in the art will readily recognize various modifications and changes which may be made to the present invention without strictly following the exemplary embodiments and applications illustrated and described herein, and without departing from the true  
20 spirit and scope of the present invention which is set forth in the following claims.

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What Is Claimed Is:

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1. A computer implemented sales system used to facilitate a sales process, the system comprising:

a plurality of subsystems each corresponding to a phase of the sales process and facilitating one or more events occurring in the corresponding phase of the sales process; and

an event manager, coupled to each of the subsystems, the event manager recognizing an event carried out by a first subsystem of the plurality of subsystems, determining a context in which the recognized event occurs and automatically initiating an operation in a second subsystem of the plurality of subsystems to facilitate a new event based on the context in which the recognized event occurs.

2. A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the context in which the recognized event occurs includes information related to a phase of the sales process in which the recognized event occurs.

3. A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the context in which the recognized event occurs includes information related to whether a previous event has occurred in the sales process.

4. A system as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

a first memory storing a plurality of rules, each rule indicating subsequent action to be taken by a subsystem of the sales system upon occurrence of a corresponding event occurring in a particular context; and

means for identifying a rule stored in said first memory corresponding to the context in which the recognized

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event occurred and for initiating the operation in the second subsystem based on the identified rule.

5. A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the first subsystem comprises a time with customer subsystem for use in converting a lead to a customer, thereby closing a sale, and the second subsystem comprises a lead management subsystem for use in converting a name to a potential customer.

6. A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the first subsystem comprises a time with customer subsystem for use in converting a lead to a customer, thereby closing a sale, and the second subsystem comprises an order management subsystem for use in converting the sale such that a product or service delivered matches a product or service sold.

7. A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the first subsystem comprises a time with customer subsystem for use in converting a lead to a customer, thereby closing a sale, and the second subsystem comprises a customer retention subsystem for use in converting an existing customer into a lead thereby gaining repeat sales.

8. A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the first subsystem comprises a time with customer subsystem for use in converting a lead to a customer, thereby closing a sale, and the second subsystem comprises a self management subsystem for use in assisting a salesperson in managing their own sales information.

9. A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the first subsystem comprises a time with customer subsystem for use in converting a lead to a customer, thereby closing a sale,

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and the second subsystem comprises a training subsystem for use in providing training to a salesperson.

10. A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the first subsystem comprises a time with customer subsystem for use in converting a lead to a customer, thereby closing a sale, and the second subsystem comprises a sales management subsystem for use in assisting a sales manager in managing a plurality of salespeople.

11. A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the first subsystem comprises an order management subsystem for use in for use in ensuring that a product or service delivered matches a product or service sold and the second subsystem comprises a self management subsystem for use in assisting a salesperson in managing their own sales information.

12. A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the first subsystem comprises a lead management subsystem for use in converting a lead to a customer and the second subsystem comprises a self management subsystem for use in assisting a salesperson in managing their own sales information.

13. A method of facilitating a sales process using a computer configured to have a plurality of subsystems, each corresponding to a phase of the sales process, in order to facilitate an event occurring in a related phase of the sales process, the method comprising the steps of:

- (a) facilitating a first event occurring in the sales process using a first subsystem of the computer;
- (b) automatically detecting the occurrence of the first event and determining a context in which the first event occurred; and



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(c) automatically initiating an operation in a second subsystem of the computer to facilitate a new event based on the context in which the first event occurred.

14. A method as recited in claim 14, wherein the determining step (b) comprises the steps of:

determining whether a prescribed event has previously occurred in a sales event prior to occurrence of the first event; and

indicating whether the prescribed event has previously occurred as at least part of the context in which the first event occurred.

15. A method as recited in claim 14, wherein the first subsystem is used to facilitate an event occurring while a salesperson is with a customer and the second subsystem is used to facilitate an event occurring while managing an order made with the customer.

16. A method as recited in claim 14, wherein the first subsystem is used to facilitate an event occurring while converting a name into a customer and the second subsystem is used to facilitate an event occurring while a salesperson is with the customer.

17. A computer implemented sales system used to facilitate a sales process, the system comprising:

a plurality of subsystems each electronically facilitating an event occurring in the sales process; and

an event manager coupled to each of the plurality of subsystems to detect the occurrence of a first event in the sales process, to link the first event in the sales process with a second event in the sales process based on prior sales experience using the sales system, and to

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automatically initiate an operation using one of the plurality of subsystems to facilitate the second event.

18. A system as recited in claim 19, wherein the event manager comprises an expert system.

19. A system as recited in claim 19, wherein the event manager comprises an expert system provided to automatically monitor events occurring in the sales process to identify which events lead to a desired outcome in a use of the sales system to produce a knowledge database for use in subsequent operations as the prior sales experience using the sales system.

20. A system as recited in claim 20, wherein the expert system comprises:

a knowledge database storing information related to the prior sales experience using the sales system;

means for realizing the implication of the information stored in the knowledge database; and

means for strategizing a desirable subsequent action based on the implication of the information stored, wherein the operation automatically initiated by the event manager carries out the desirable subsequent action.

SMALL BUSINESSVERIFIED STATEMENT (DECLARATION) CLAIMING SMALL ENTITY STATUS  
(37 C.F.R. 1.9(f) AND 1.27(c)) - SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN

I hereby declare that I am

- a) ☐ the owner of the small business concern identified below:  
 b) ☒ an official of the small business concern empowered to act on behalf of the concern identified below:

NAME OF CONCERN: Clear With Computers, Inc.  
 ADDRESS OF CONCERN: 1983 Premier Drive, P.O. Box 4459  
Mankato, MN 56002-4459

I hereby declare that the above identified small business concern qualifies as a small business concern as defined in 13 C.F.R. 121.3-18, and reproduced in 37 C.F.R. 1.9(d), for purposes of paying reduced fees under Section 41(a) and (b) of Title 35, United States Code, in that the number of employees of the concern, including those of its affiliates, does not exceed 500 persons. For purposes of this statement, (1) the number of employees of the business concern is the average over the previous fiscal year of the concern of the persons employed on a full-time, part-time or temporary basis during each of the pay periods of the fiscal year, and (2) concerns are affiliates of each other when either, directly or indirectly, one concern controls or has the power to control the other, or a third party or parties controls or has the power to control both.

I hereby declare that rights under contract or law have been conveyed to and remain with the small business concern identified above with regard to the invention, entitled INTEGRATED COMPUTERIZED SALES FORCE AUTOMATION SYSTEM by inventor(s) Jerome D. Johnson, David R. Lundberg and Michael P. Krebsbach described in

- a) ☐ the specification filed herewith.  
 b) ☐ provisional application serial no. \_\_\_\_\_, filed \_\_\_\_\_.  
 c) ☒ non-provisional application serial no. 08/550,089, filed October 30, 1995.  
 d) ☐ patent no. \_\_\_\_\_, issued \_\_\_\_\_.

If the rights held by the above-identified small business concern are not exclusive, each individual, concern or organization having rights to the invention is listed below\* and no rights to the invention are held by any person, other than the inventor, who could not qualify as an independent inventor under 37 C.F.R. 1.9(c) or by any concern which would not qualify as a small business concern under 37 C.F.R. 1.9(d) or a nonprofit organization under 37 C.F.R. 1.9(e). \*NOTE: Separate verified statements are required from each named person, concern or organization having rights to the invention averring to their status as small entities. (37 C.F.R. 1.27)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
 a) ☐ INDIVIDUAL      b) ☐ SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN      c) ☐ NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION  
 NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
 a) ☐ INDIVIDUAL      b) ☐ SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN      c) ☐ NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

I acknowledge the duty to file, in this application or patent, notification of any change in status resulting in loss of entitlement to small entity status prior to paying, or at the time of paying, the earliest of the issue fee or any maintenance fee due after the date on which status as a small entity is no longer appropriate. (37 C.F.R. 1.28(b))

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application, any patent issuing thereof, or any patent to which this verified statement is directed.

NAME Jerome D. Johnson  
 TITLE President  
 ADDRESS 1983 Premier Drive, P.O. Box 4459, Mankato, MN 56002-4459

SIGNATURE  DATE 11/15/96

MERCER, I, GOULD, SMITH, EDELL, WELTER & SCHMIDT

United States Patent Application

COMBINED DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY

As a below named inventor I hereby declare that: my residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name; that

I verily believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or a joint inventor (if plural inventors are named below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled: INTEGRATED COMPUTERIZED SALES FORCE AUTOMATION SYSTEM.

The specification of which

- a.    is attached hereto
- b. X was filed on October 30, 1995 as application entitled INTEGRATED COMPUTERIZED SALES FORCE AUTOMATION SYSTEM, having an attorney docket number 7709.72US01 and was amended on    (if applicable) (in the case of a PCT-filed application) described and claimed in international no.    filed    and as amended on    (if any), which I have reviewed and for which I solicit a United States patent.

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to the examination of this application in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, § 1.56 (see page 3 attached hereto).

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, § 119/365 of any foreign application(s) for patent of inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on the basis of which priority is claimed:

- a. X no such applications have been filed.
- b.    such applications have been filed as follows:

FOREIGN APPLICATION(S), IF ANY, CLAIMING PRIORITY UNDER 35 USC § 119			
COUNTRY	APPLICATION NUMBER	DATE OF FILING (day, month, year)	DATE OF ISSUE (day, month, year)
ALL FOREIGN APPLICATION(S), IF ANY, FILED BEFORE THE PRIORITY APPLICATION(S)			
COUNTRY	APPLICATION NUMBER	DATE OF FILING (day, month, year)	DATE OF ISSUE (day, month, year)

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, § 120/365 of any United States and PCT international application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, § 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose material information as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, § 1.56(a) which occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application.

U.S. APPLICATION NUMBER	DATE OF FILING (day, month, year)	STATUS (patented, pending, abandoned)

I hereby appoint the following attorney(s) and/or patent agent(s) to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected herewith:

Adriano, Sarah B.	Reg. No. 34,4	Funk, Steven R.	Reg. No. 37,830	Ne, Albin J.	Reg. No. 28,650
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Beard, John L.	Reg. No. 27,512	Gates, George H.	Reg. No. 33,500	Plunkett, Theodore	Reg. No. 37,209
Beck, Robert C.	Reg. No. 28,184	Golla, Charles E.	Reg. No. 26,896	Pollinger, Steven J.	Reg. No. 35,326
Bejin, Thomas E.	Reg. No. 37,089	Gorman, Alan G.	Reg. No. 38,472	Reich, John C.	Reg. No. 37,703
Berman, Charles	Reg. No. 29,249	Gould, John D.	Reg. No. 18,223	Reiland, Earl D.	Reg. No. 25,767
Bogucki, Raymond A.	Reg. No. 17,426	Gresens, John J.	Reg. No. 33,112	Schmaltz, David G.	Reg. No. P-39,828
Bruess, Steven C.	Reg. No. 34,130	Hamre, Curtis B.	Reg. No. 29,165	Schmidt, Cecil C.	Reg. No. 20,566
Byrne, Linda M.	Reg. No. 32,404	Hassing, Thomas A.	Reg. No. 36,159	Schuman, Mark D.	Reg. No. 31,197
Carlson, Alan G.	Reg. No. 25,959	Hillson, Randall A.	Reg. No. 31,838	Schumann, Michael D.	Reg. No. 30,422
Carter, Charles G.	Reg. No. 35,093	Hollingsworth, Mark A.	Reg. No. 38,491	Sebald, Gregory A.	Reg. No. 33,280
Caspers, Philip P.	Reg. No. 33,227	Johnston, Scott W.	Reg. No. P-39,721	Sharp, Janice A.	Reg. No. 34,051
Chiapetta, James R.	Reg. No. P-39,634	Kastelic, Joseph M.	Reg. No. 37,160	Skoog, Mark T.	Reg. No. P-40,178
Clifford, John A.	Reg. No. 30,247	Kettelberger, Denise	Reg. No. 33,924	Smith, Jerome R.	Reg. No. 35,684
Conrad, Timothy R.	Reg. No. 30,164	Kowalchuk, Alan W.	Reg. No. 31,535	Sorensen, Andrew D.	Reg. No. 33,606
Cooper, Victor G.	Reg. No. P-39,641	Kowalchuk, Katherine M.	Reg. No. 36,848	Stinebruner, Scott A.	Reg. No. 38,323
Crawford, Robert	Reg. No. 32,122	Krull, Mark A.	Reg. No. 34,205	Strawbridge, Douglas A.	Reg. No. 28,376
Daignault, Ronald A.	Reg. No. 25,968	Lacy, Paul A.	Reg. No. P-38,946	Strothoff, Kristine M.	Reg. No. 34,259
Daley, Dennis R.	Reg. No. 34,994	Lasky, Michael B.	Reg. No. 29,555	Sumner, John P.	Reg. No. 29,114
Daulton, Julie R.	Reg. No. 36,414	Lynch, David W.	Reg. No. 36,204	Sumners, John S.	Reg. No. 24,216
Davidson, Ben M.	Reg. No. 38,424	Mau, Michael L.	Reg. No. 30,087	Tellekson, David K.	Reg. No. 32,314
Dempster, Shawn B.	Reg. No. 34,321	McCormack, Myra H.	Reg. No. 36,502	Underhill, Albert L.	Reg. No. 27,403
DiPietro, Mark J.	Reg. No. 28,707	McDaniel, Karen D.	Reg. No. 37,674	Vandenburgh, J. Derek	Reg. No. 32,179
Dryja, Michael A.	Reg. No. P-39,662	McDonald, Daniel W.	Reg. No. 32,044	Welter, Paul A.	Reg. No. 20,890
Edell, Robert T.	Reg. No. 20,187	McDonald, Wendy M.	Reg. No. 32,427	Williams, Douglas J.	Reg. No. 27,054
Epp Ryan, Sandra	Reg. No. P-39,667	Miller, William D.	Reg. No. 37,988	Wood, Gregory B.	Reg. No. 28,133
Farber, Michael B.	Reg. No. 32,612	Mueller, Douglas P.	Reg. No. 30,300	Xu, Min S.	Reg. No. 39,536
Fauver, Cole M.	Reg. No. 36,797	Nasiedlak, Tyler L.	Reg. No. P-40,099		

I hereby authorize them to act and rely on instructions from and communicate directly with the person/assignee/attorney/ firm/organization/who/which first sends/sent this case to them and by whom/which I hereby declare that I have consented after full disclosure to be represented unless/until I instruct Merchant, Gould to the contrary.

Please direct all correspondence in this case to Merchant, Gould, Smith, Edell, Welter & Schmidt at the address indicated below:

Merchant, Gould, Smith, Edell,  
Welter & Schmidt  
3100 Norwest Center  
90 South Seventh Street  
Minneapolis, MN 55402-4131

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

2	Full Name Of Inventor	Family Name	First Given Name	Second Given Name
0	Residence & Citizenship	City	State or Foreign Country	Country of Citizenship
1	Post Office Address	Post Office Address	City	State & Zip Code/Country
2	Full Name Of Inventor	Family Name	First Given Name	Second Given Name
0	Residence & Citizenship	City	State or Foreign Country	Country of Citizenship
2	Post Office Address	Post Office Address	City	State & Zip Code/Country
2	Full Name Of Inventor	Family Name	First Given Name	Second Given Name
0	Residence & Citizenship	City	State or Foreign Country	Country of Citizenship
3	Post Office Address	Post Office Address	City	State & Zip Code/Country

Signature of Inventor 201	Signature of Inventor 202	Signature of Inventor 203
Date 10/30/95	Date 10/30/95	Date 9 Nov 95

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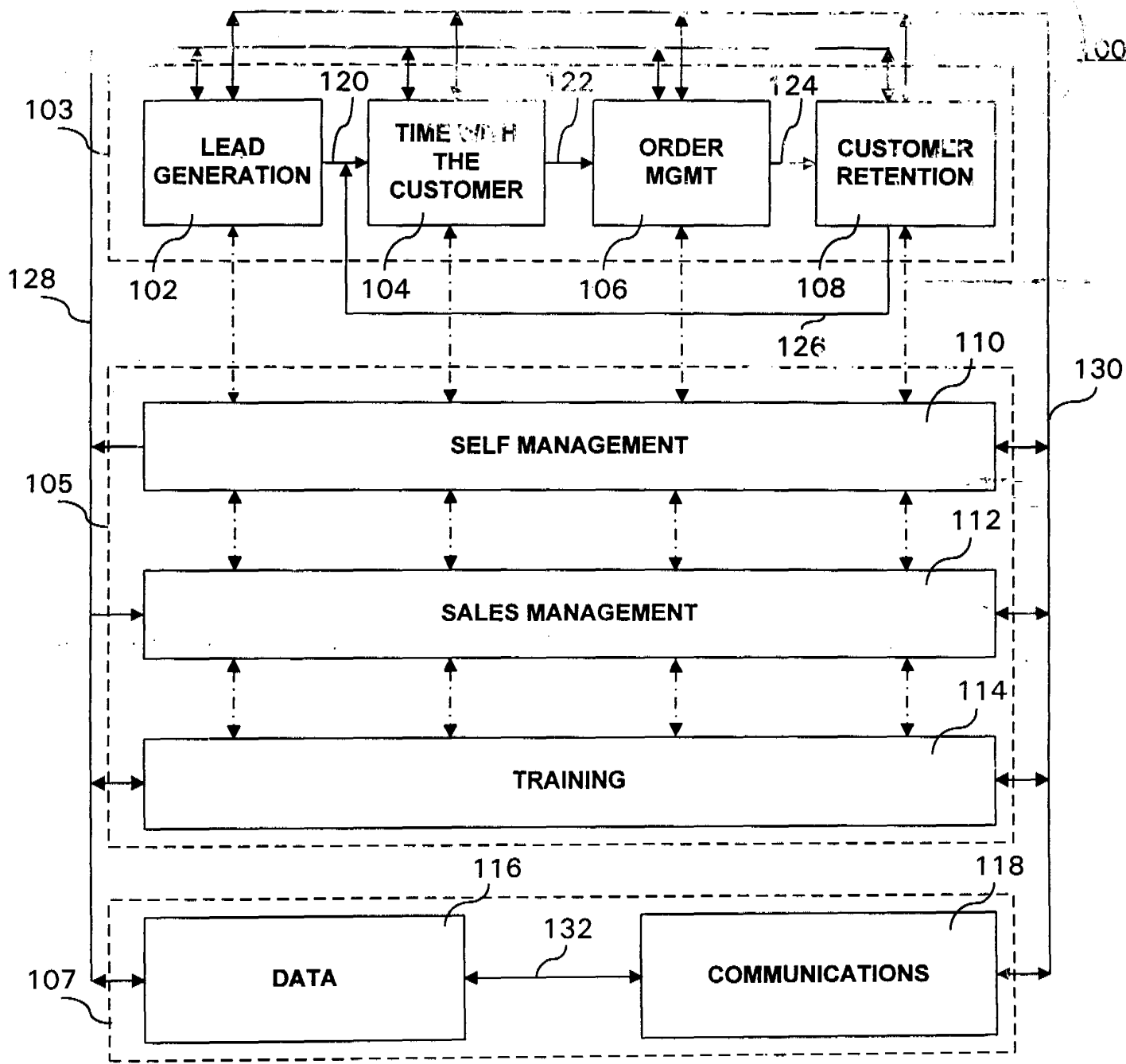
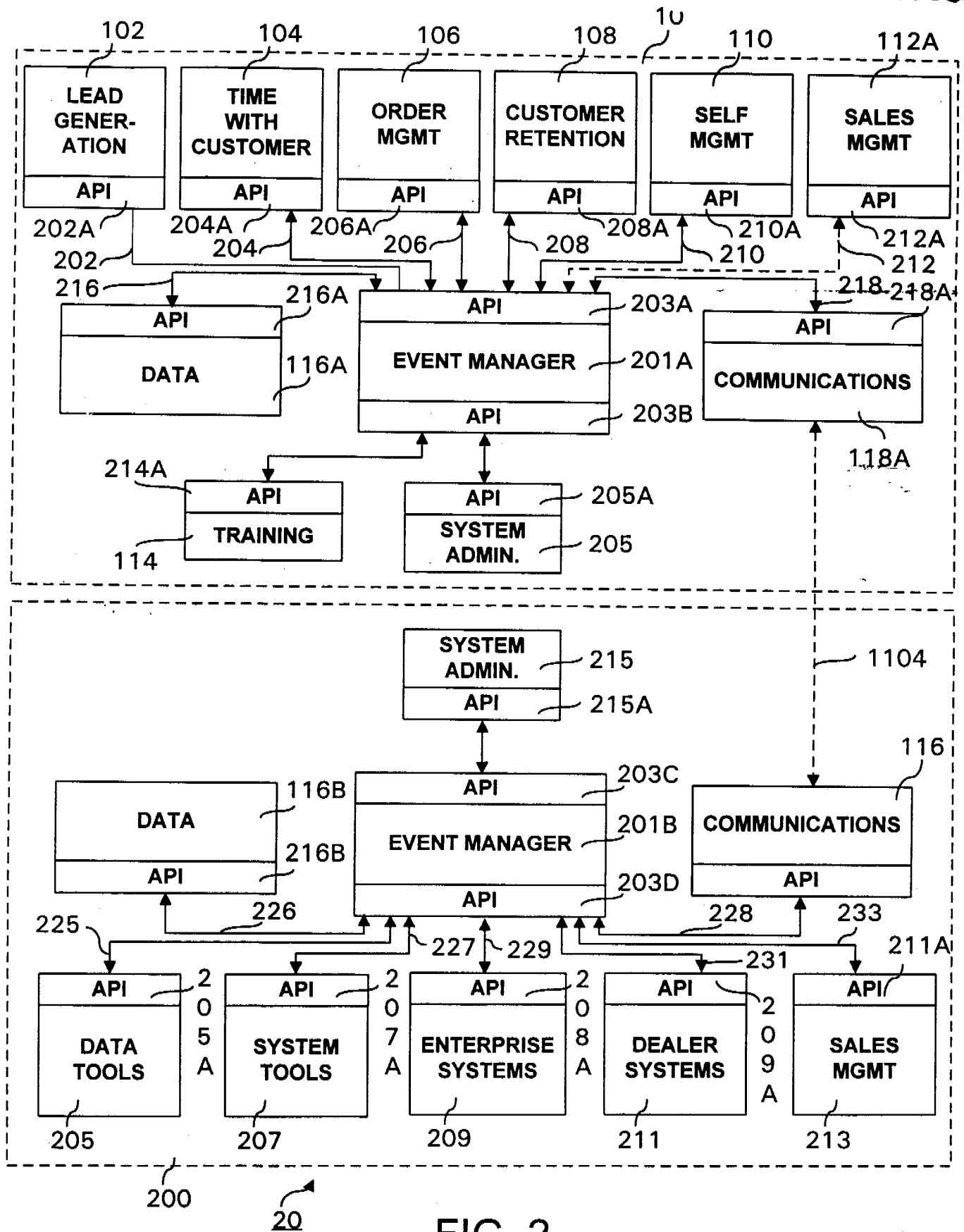


FIG. 1

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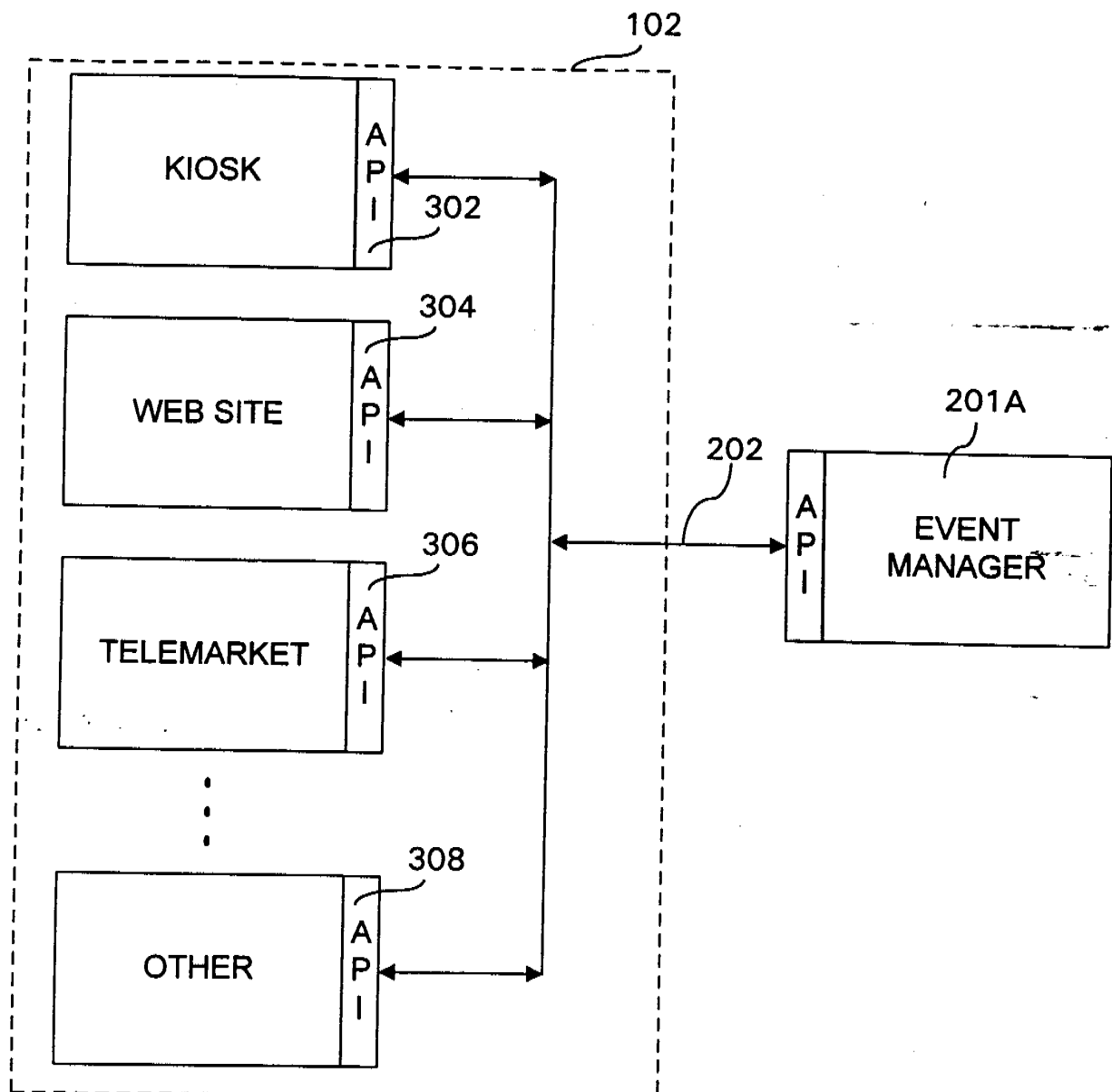


FIG. 3



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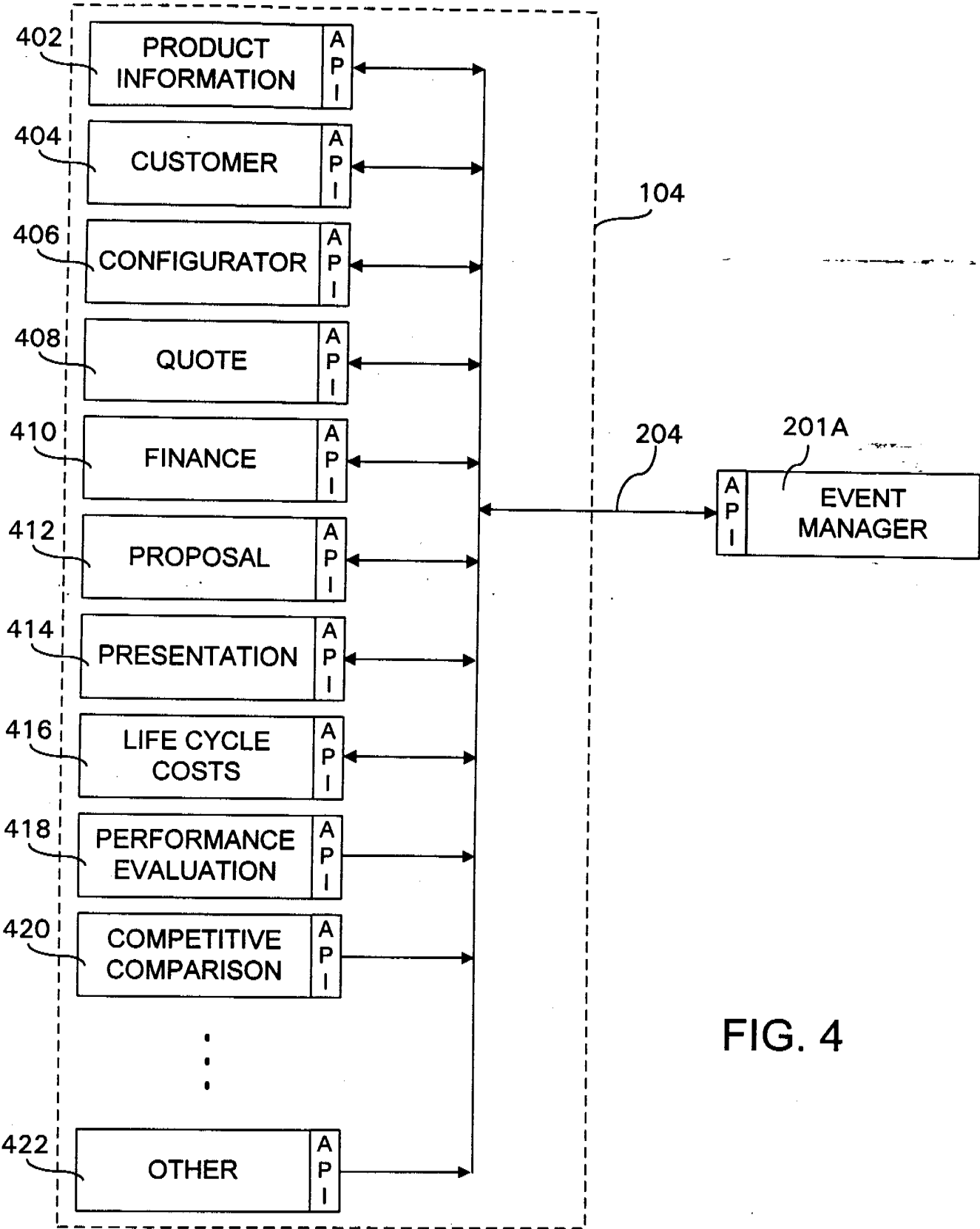


FIG. 4

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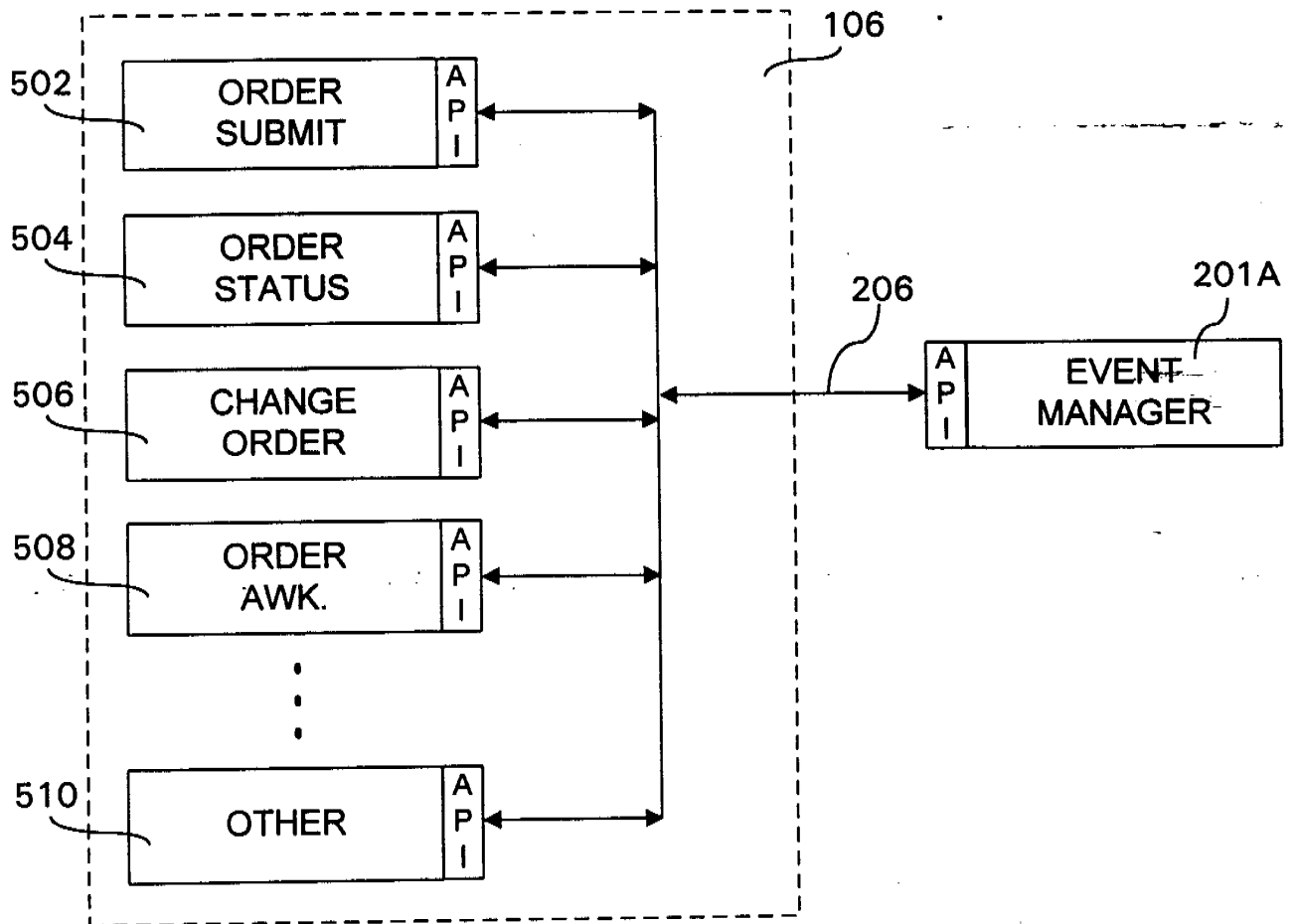


FIG. 5

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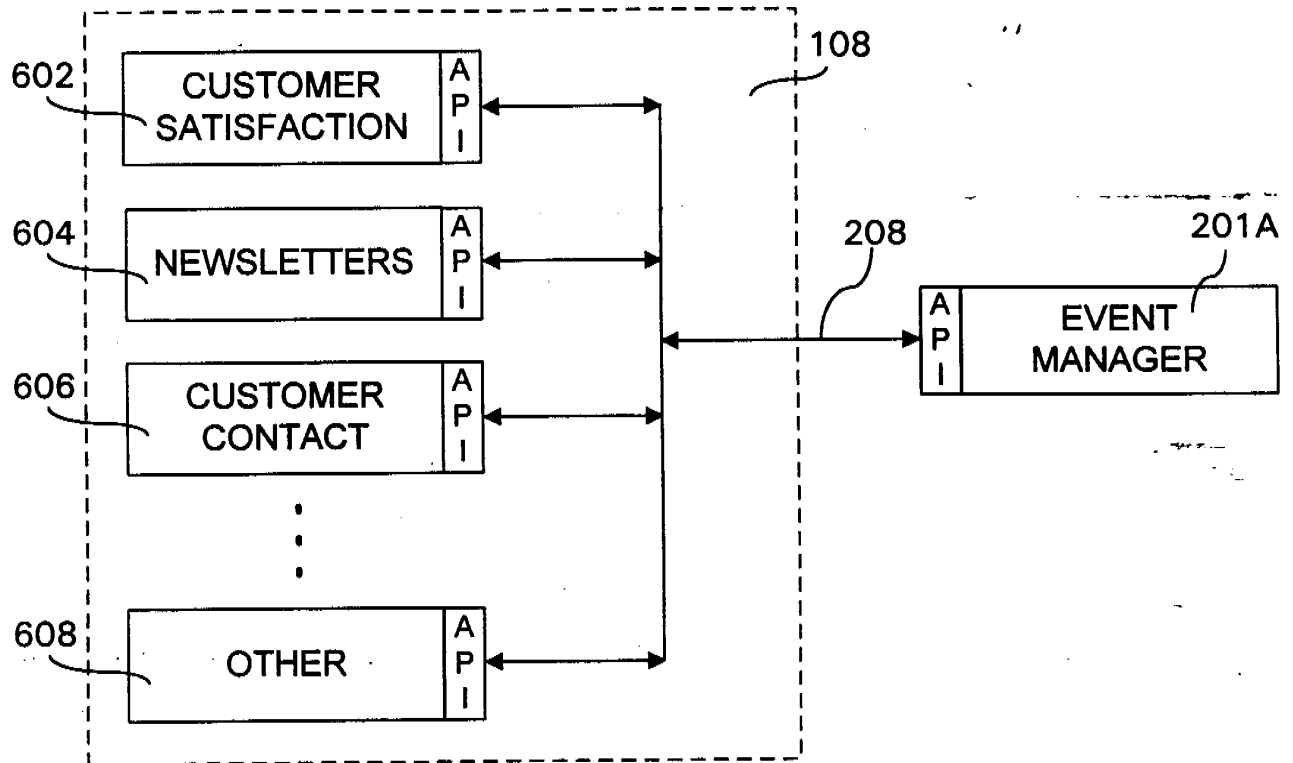


FIG. 6

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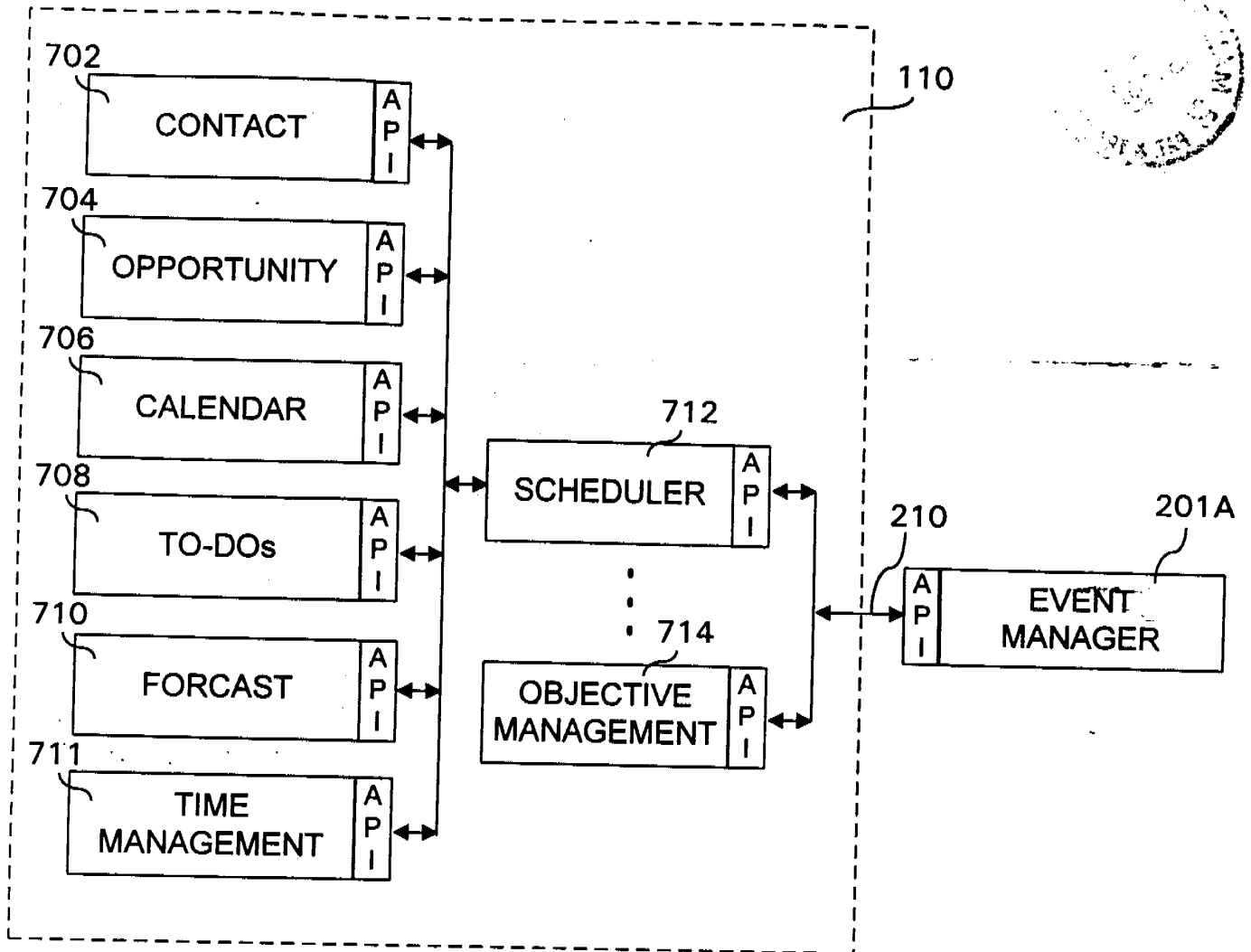


FIG. 7

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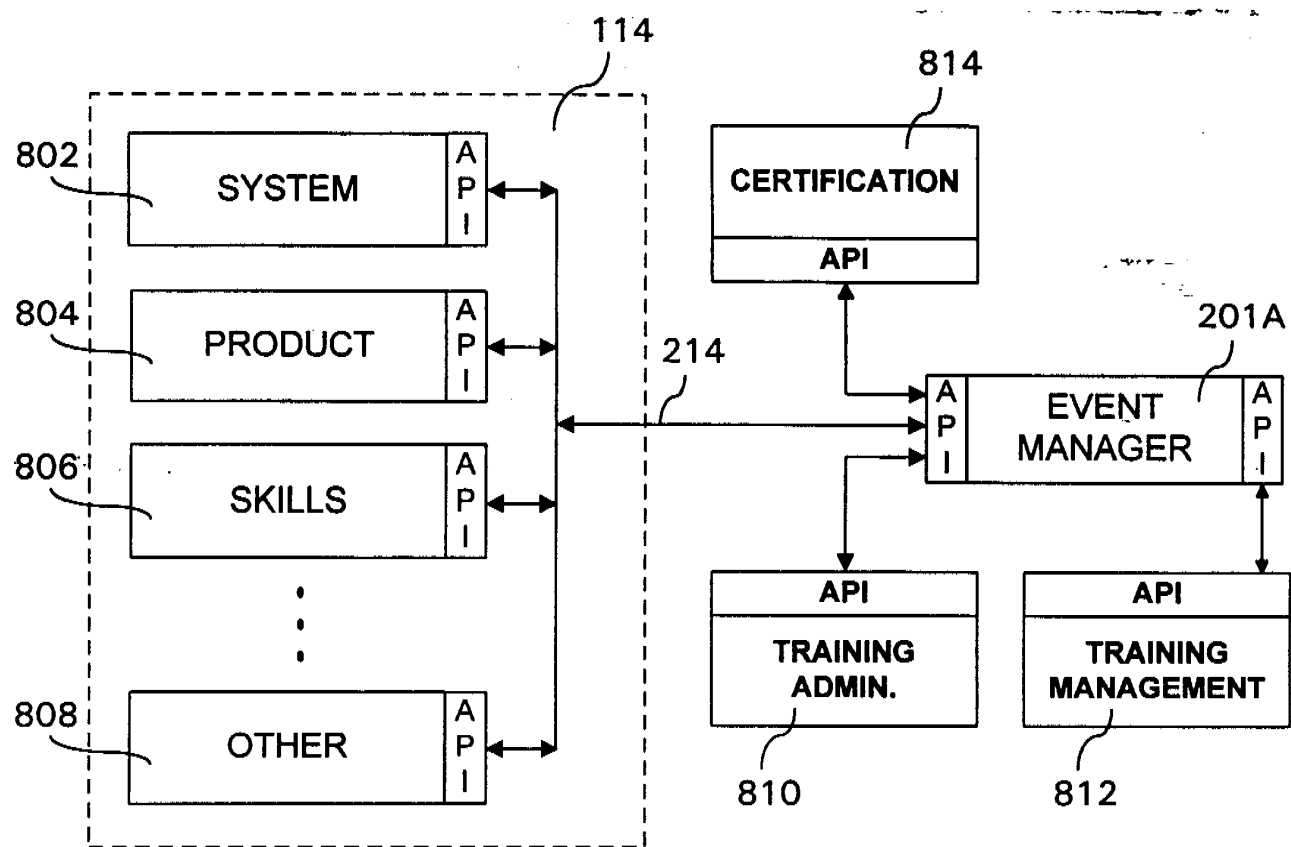


FIG. 8

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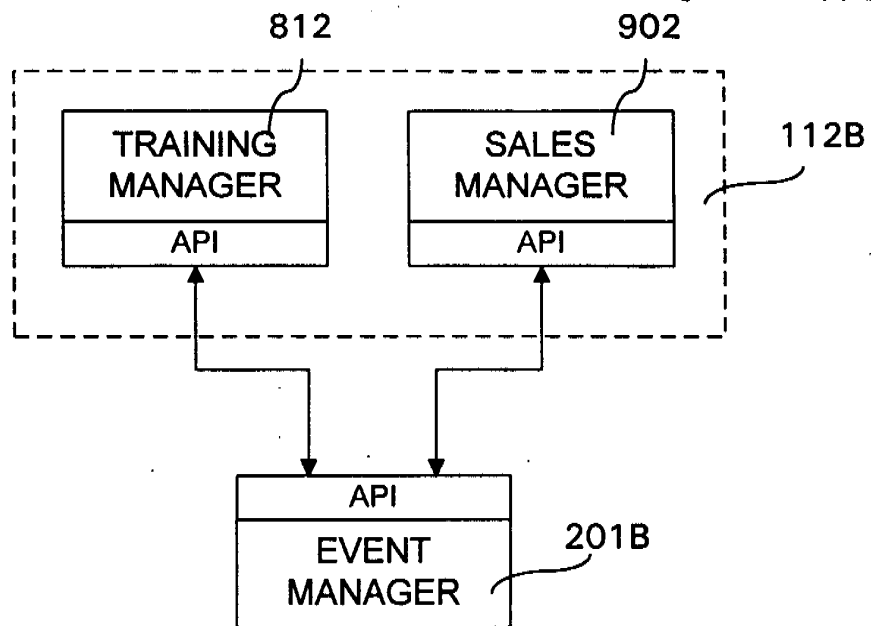


FIG. 9

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AS ORIGINAL! LED

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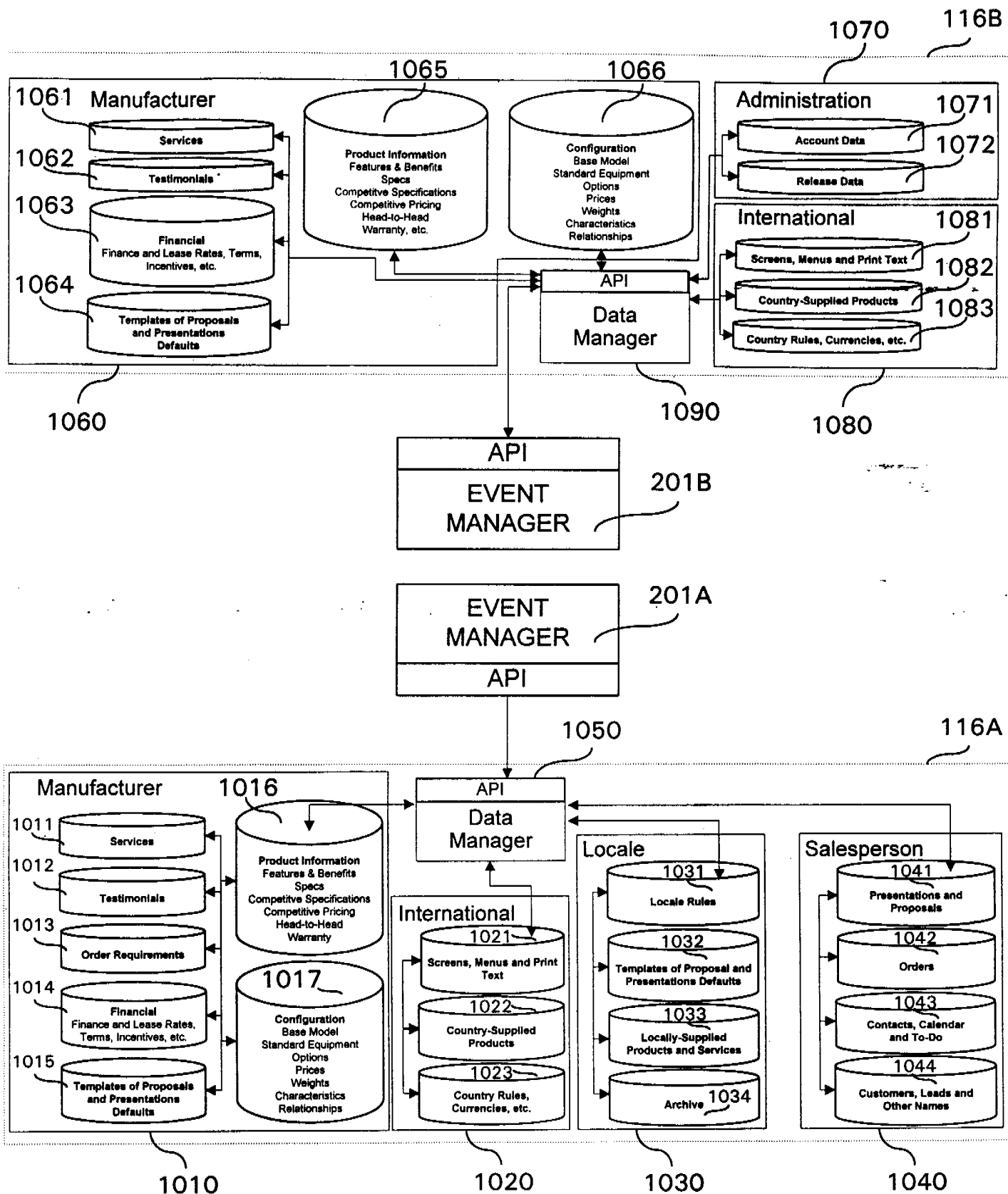


FIG. 10

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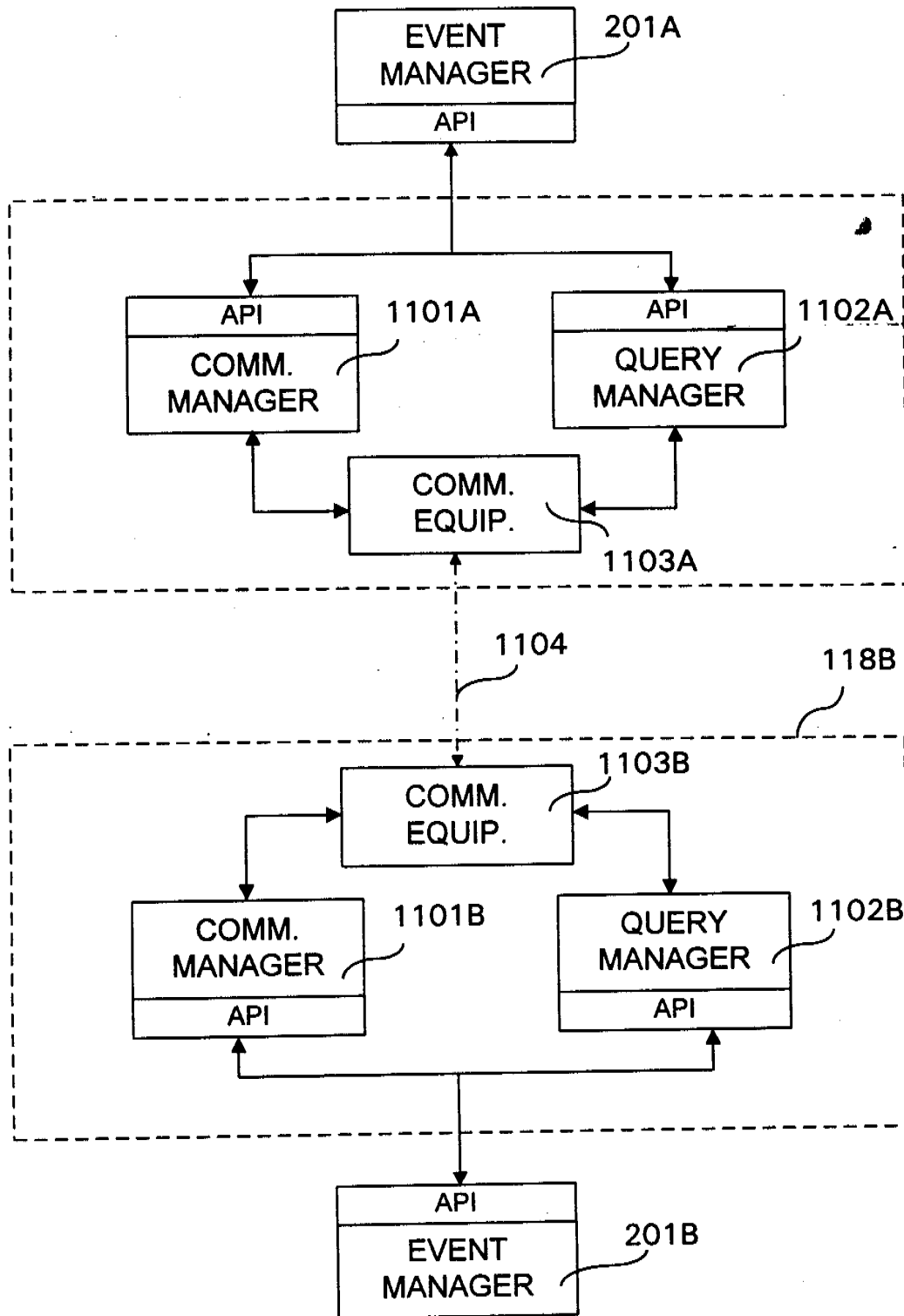
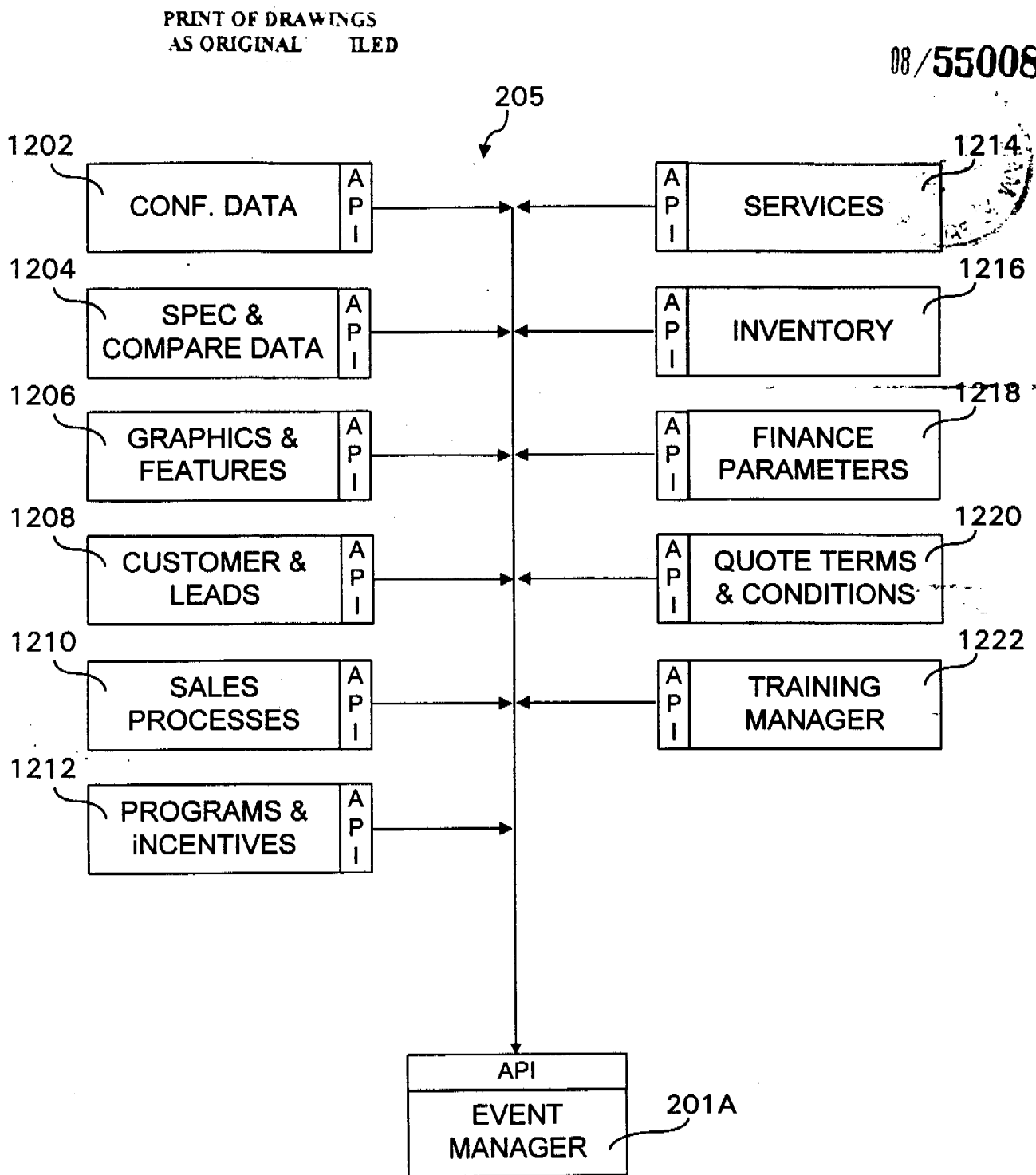


FIG. 11





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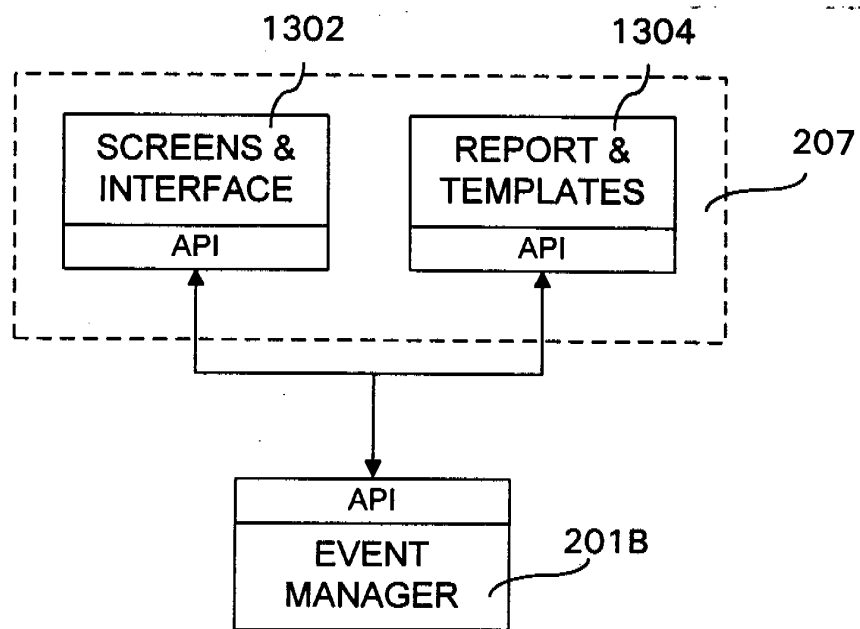


FIG. 13

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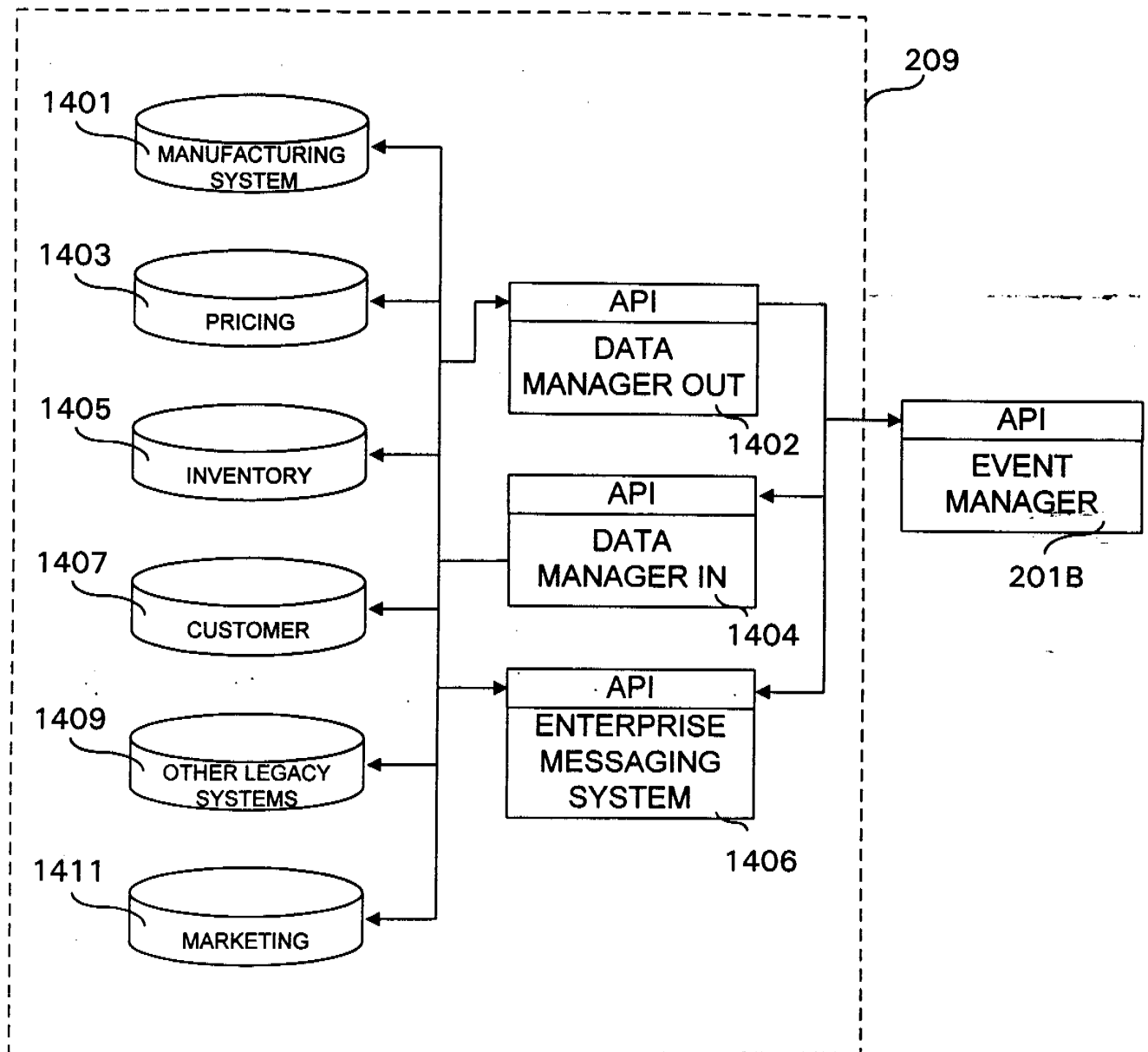


FIG. 14

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	Time With Customer							Self Management							Training			Pre-Sales		Order Management		Customer Retention		Sales Management					
	C	P	C	Q	F	L	P	O	S	C	F	T	T	R	C	S	P	S	K	L	O	O	D		O	C	F	C	
	u	r	o	u	i	i	r	p	p	o	o	r	r	e	o	y	r	k	i	l	r	r	r		p	o	n	a	m
	s	t	m	t	n	c	a	r	r	r	r	a	a	f	m		s	p	i	s	a	s		m	o	p	r	c	m
	t	e	e	e	e	e	e	t	t	t	t	t	t	t	t		t	t	t	t	t	t		t	t	t	t	t	
Local Information Storage																													
Customer Info	+	#	#	#	#	#	#	+	#	+	#	#	#	#	#					+	+	#		#		+	+	#	#
ID Number	+	#	#	#	#	#	#	+	#	+	#	#	#	#	#					+	+	#		#		+	+	#	#
Account Number	+	#	#	#	#	#	#	+	#	+	#	#	#	#	#					+	+	#		#		+	+	#	#
Address	+	#	#	#	#	#	#	+	#	+	#	#	#	#	#					+	+	#		#		+	+	#	#
Business Name	+	#	#	#	#	#	#	+	#	+	#	#	#	#	#					+	+	#		#		+	+	#	#
City	+	#	#	#	#	#	#	+	#	+	#	#	#	#	#					+	+	#		#		+	+	#	#
County	+	#	#	#	#	#	#	+	#	+	#	#	#	#	#					+	+	#		#		+	+	#	#
State	+	#	#	#	#	#	#	+	#	+	#	#	#	#	#					+	+	#		#		+	+	#	#
Zip Code	+	#	#	#	#	#	#	+	#	+	#	#	#	#	#					+	+	#		#		+	+	#	#
Country	+	#	#	#	#	#	#	+	#	+	#	#	#	#	#					+	+	#		#		+	+	#	#
Phone Number	+	#	#	#	#	#	#	+	#	+	#	#	#	#	#					+	+	#		#		+	+	#	#
Fax Number	+	#	#	#	#	#	#	+	#	+	#	#	#	#	#					+	+	#		#		+	+	#	#
Type of Customer	+	#	#	#	#	#	#	+	#	+	#	#	#	#	#					+	+	#		#		+	+	#	#
Initial Contact Date	+							+	#	+										+	+	#		#		+	+	#	#
Last Update Date	#							+	#	+										+	+	#		#		+	+	#	#
Product Info	+	#					#													#	#								
Product Graphics		#	#				#													#	#								
Specifications		#	#				#													#	#								
Competitive Specs		#					#													#	#								
Head-to-Head Info		#					#													#	#								
Bid Spec Info		+					#													#	#								
Dealership Mktg Info		#					#													#	#								
Salesperson Info		#					#													#	#								
Configuration Info		+	#				#															#							
Model(s) Selected		+	#				#													+	+	#							
Description		+	#				#													+	+	#							
Total Price		+	#				#													+	+	#							
Freight Cost		+					#													+	+	#							
Total Weight		+					#													+	+	#							
Spec ID		+	#				#													+	+	#							
Date Created		+					#													+	+	#							
Quote ID		+	#				#													+	+	#							
Selected Options		+	#				#													+	+	#							
Option Descriptions		#					#													#	#								
Option Codes		#					#													#	#								
Option Weights		#					#													#	#								
Option Prices		#					#													#	#								
Option Compatibility		#					#													#	#								
Option Notes		+					#													+	+	#							
Option Quantities		+					#													+	+	#							
Incentive Info		#					#													#	#								
Desired Performance		+					#															#							
Special Opt Desc.		+					#															#							
Special Opt Codes		+					#															#							
Special Opt Weights		+					#															#							
Special Opt Prices		+					#															#							
Special Opt Notes		+					#															#							
Order Info							#															+							
Order ID							#															+							
Billing Information							#															+							
Special Ordering Instructions							#															+							
Trade-In Info							#																						
Description							#															+							
Quantity							#															+							
Allowance							#															+							
Debt							#															+							
Refurbish							#															+							
Expected Sales Value							#																						
Lien Holder Info							#																						

FIG.15A

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	Time With Customer							Self Management							Training			Pre-Sales		Order Management		Customer Retention		Sales Management					
Local Information Storage	C	P	C	Q	F	L	P	O	S	C	F	T	R	C	S	P	S	K	L	O		D		O	C	F	C		
	ustomer	rodu	onfig	uote	inance	ifeC	rope	ppor	ched	ontract	or do	rain	refer	omm	ystem	rodu	kills	leads		Order	Submit	irect	Mktg			ppor	ontract	inance	omm
	t	ct	ur	n	ce	ycl	ntal	ty	uler	ting	ling	ing	ncel	ion		uct													
<b>Quote Info</b>				+			#	#						#															
Unit Quantity				+			#	#						#															
Quoted Price				+			#	#						#															
Discount Description				+			#	#						#															
Discount Amount				+			#	#						#															
Addition Description				+			#	#						#															
Addition Amount				+			#	#						#															
Tax/Fee Description				+			#	#						#															
Tax/Fee Amount				+			#																						
Tax/Fee Basis				+			#																						
Tax/Fee Percent				+			#																						
Tax/Fee Type				+			#																						
Profit Margin				+			#	#						#															
<b>Finance Info</b>					+		#																						
Plan Name					#		#	#																					
Plan Price					+		#	#																					
Plan Amount Down					+		#	#																					
Insurance Descriptions					+		#	#																					
Insurance Costs					+		#	#																					
Payment Method					+		#	#																					
Payment Type					+		#	#																					
Interest Type					+		#	#																					
Interest Rate					+		#	#																					
Term					+		#	#																					
Contract Date					+		#	#																					
Interest Start Date					+		#																						
Payment Start Date					+		#																						
# of Skip Payments					+		#																						
Balloon Amount					+		#																						
Payment Amount					+		#																						
Incentive Info					#		#	#																					
Feature/Benefit Info					#		#																						
Credit App Info					+		#							#															
Contract Info					+		#							#															
<b>Graphics</b>																													
<b>Life Cycle Info</b>																													
Cost Category Names						+	#																						
Cost Category Amounts						+	#																						
Comparison Unit Description						+	#																						
Comparison Unit Amounts						+	#																						
<b>Set-Up Info</b>																													
Dealership Number	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Dealership Name	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Dealership Address	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Dealership County	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Dealership State	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Dealership Zip Code	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Dealership Phone #	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Dealership Fax #	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
<b>Dealership Mktg Info</b>	#																												
<b>Dealer Option Descs</b>																													
Dealer Option Prices																													
Dealer Option Codes																													
Dealer Option Wghts																													
<b>Salesperson Resumes</b>	#																												

FIG.15B

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	Time With Customer							Self Management							Training			Pre-Sales			Order Management		Customer Retention		Sales Management				
	C	P	C	Q	F	L	P	O	S	C	F	T	R	C	S	P	S	K	L		O		D		O	C	F	C	
	u	r	o	u	i	n	r	p	r	o	d	u	c	t	i	n	g	u	n	i	t	y							
Local Information Storage																													
Salesperson Passwords	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	
Salesperson Priveledges	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	
Proposal Templates							#																						
Presentation Templates							#																						
Finance Plan Parameters					#																								
Finance Plan Defaults					#																								
Quote Tax Defaults				#																									
Quote Profit Margin Default				#																									
Default Model Configuration			#															#											
Presentation Info																													
Template Definition							#																						
Setup Definition							#																						
Slide Contents							#	#																		#			
Proposal Info																													
Template Definition							#																						
Setup Definition							#																						
Report Contents							#	#																		#			

FIG.15C

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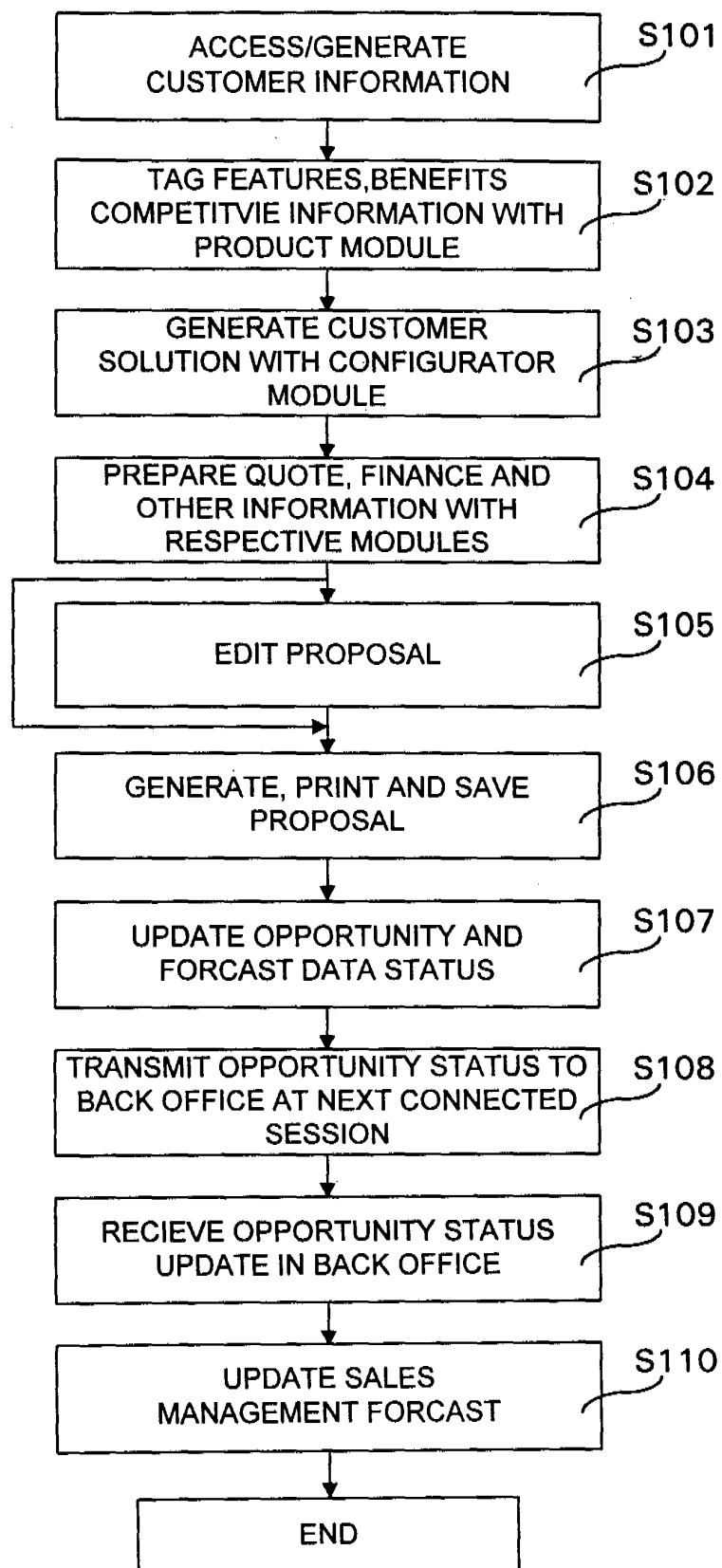


FIG. 16

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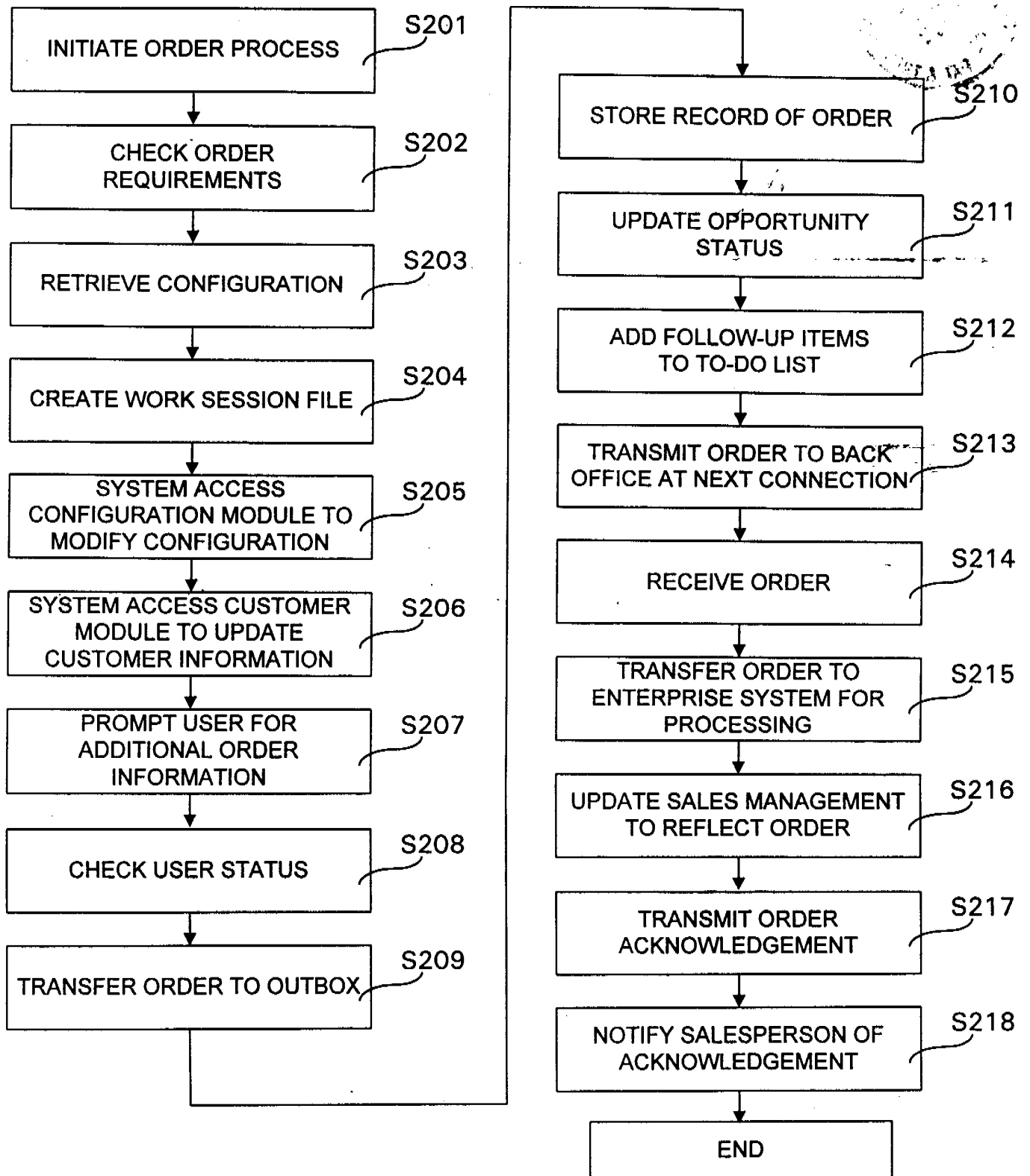


FIG. 17



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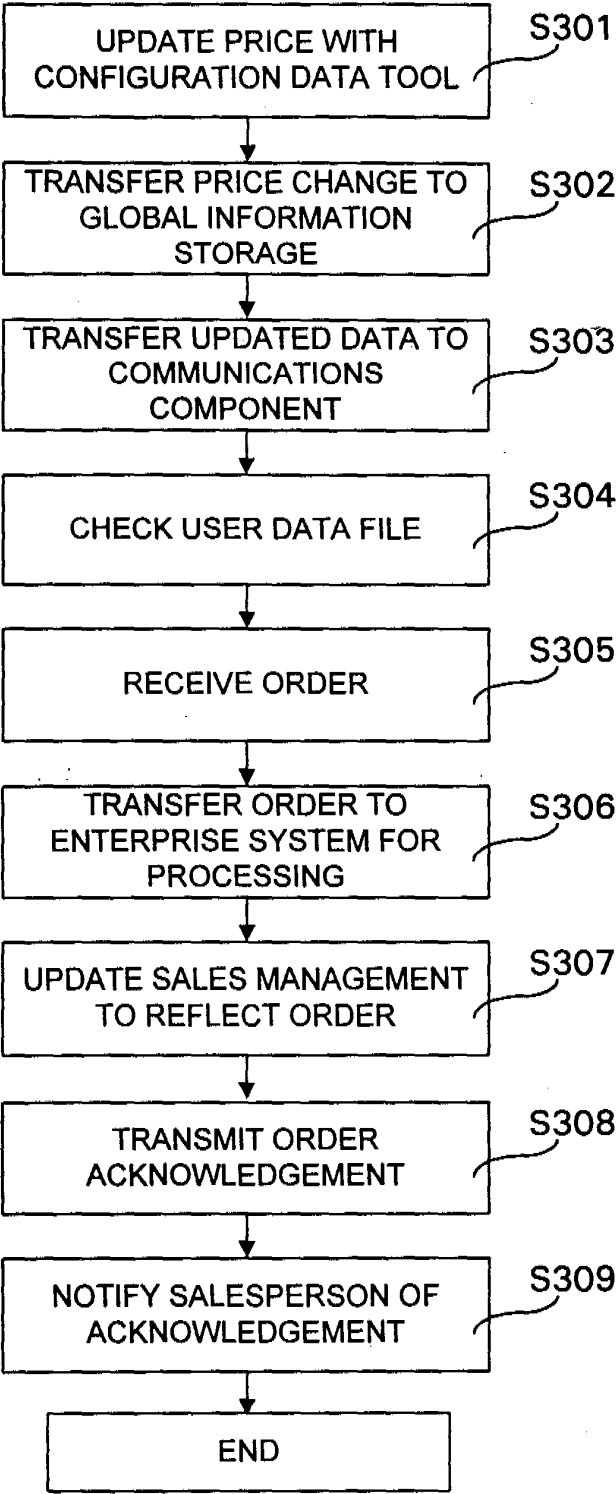


FIG. 18

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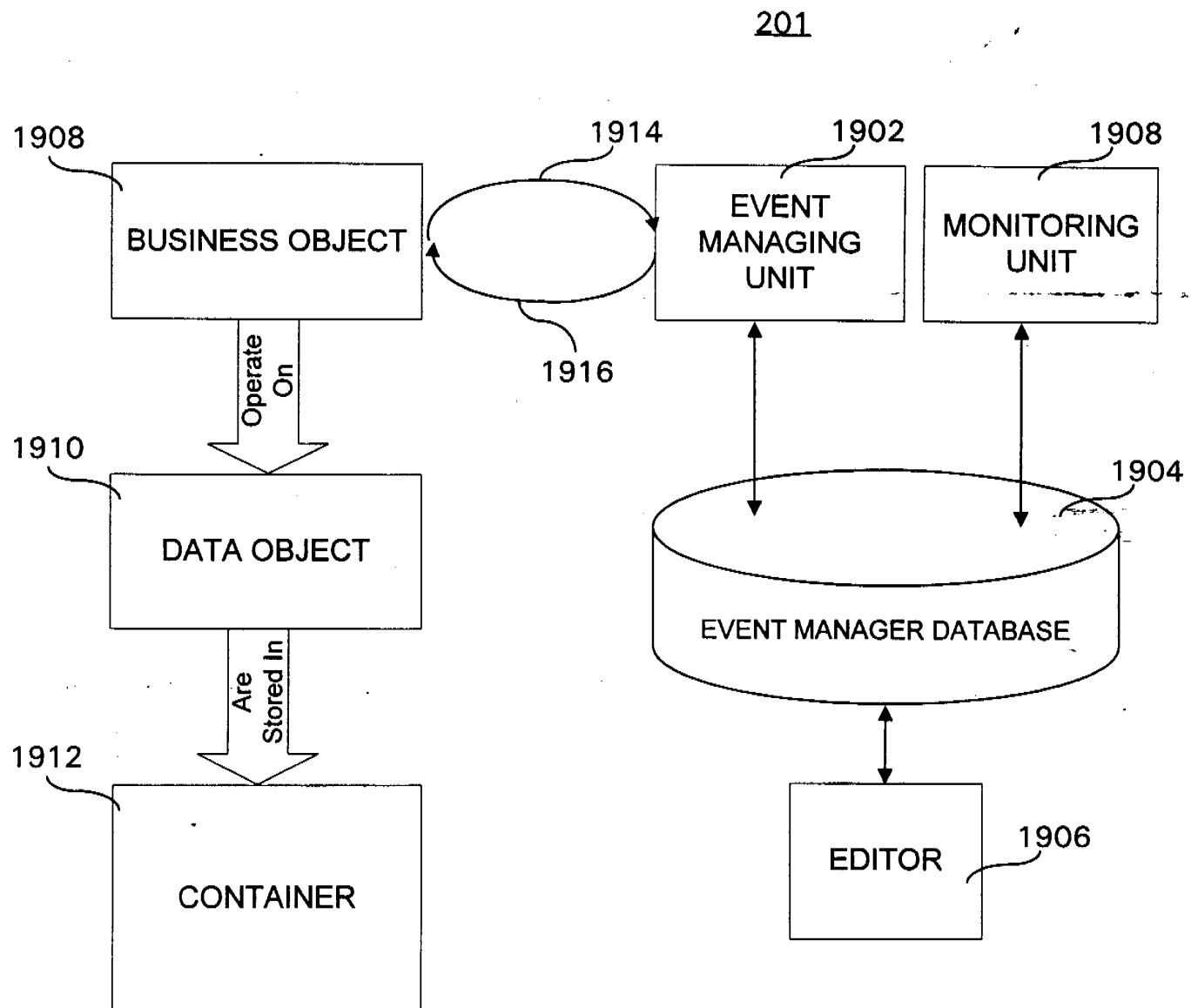


FIG. 19

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08/550089

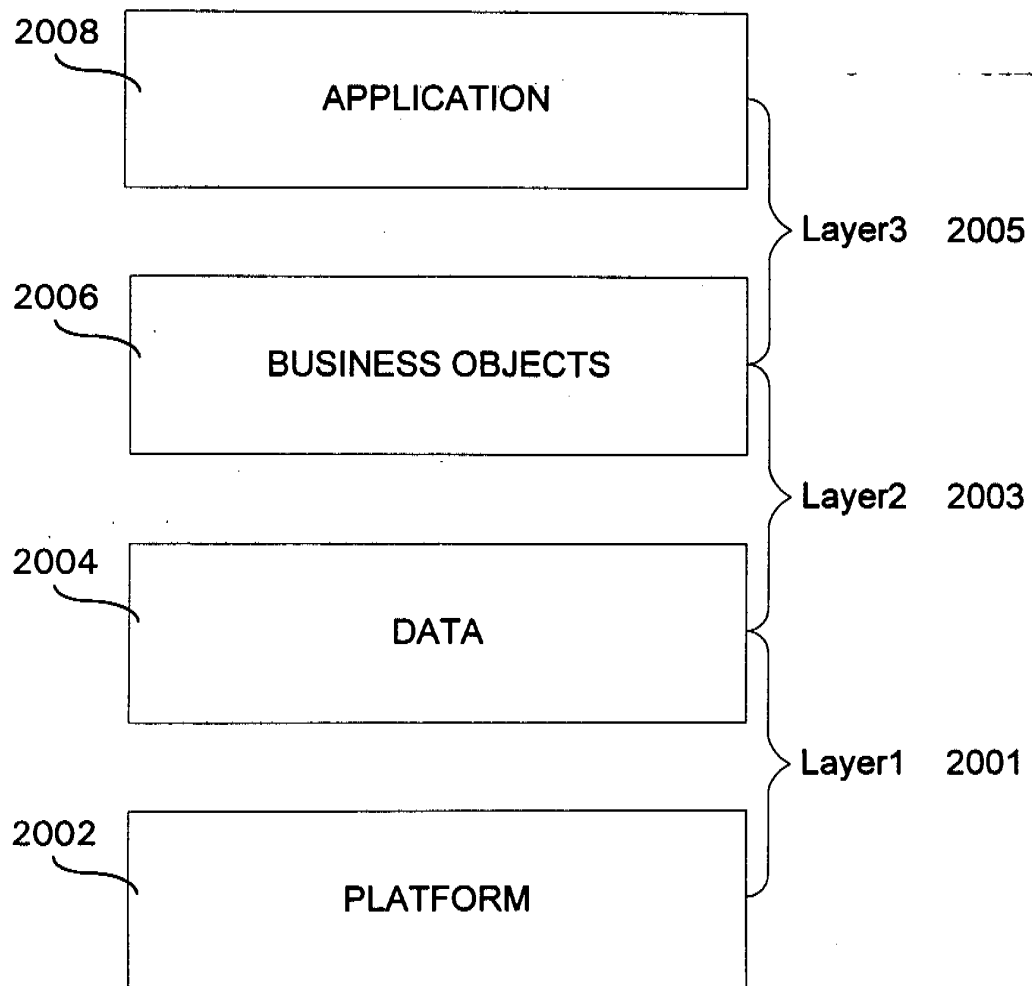


FIG. 20

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08/550089

2101	2102	2103	2104
Component	Event	Related Module	"Paired" Event - System Intelligence
1. Pre-Sales (Lead Management)	a) Salesperson identifies leads for particular products	Contact Management	<p><b>EXAMPLES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linked to 1(d) and 1(e) to bring leads to the salesperson and to 3(a, b, f) to notify salesperson of the recommended actions and process</li> </ul>
	b) A directed mailing for a particular product is sent out	Contact Management, Product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linked to 1(a), 2(a), and 2(c) to send out product information targeted at the specific market audience</li> </ul>
	c) Promotional materials on new incentive program for product are mailed out	Contact Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linked to 2(c), 2(h), and 5(a) to send out information on new incentive program to customers to which proposals for the product have been generated but an order is not yet submitted.</li> </ul>
	d) A customer contacts an Internet Web-site to get product information	Product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linked to 1(a) and 3(a) to notify to salesperson of the contact and schedule a follow-up and to 2(a) to communicate known requirements directly to the sales person</li> </ul>
	e) A customer uses a kiosk to gain information on a product or service and request follow-up call from company representative		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linked to 1(a) and 3(a) to notify to salesperson of the contact and schedule a follow-up and to 2(a) to communicate known requirements directly to the sales-person</li> </ul>
	f) Salesperson profiles the lead based on key criteria	Contact Management, Product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linked to 2(a) and 1(d, e) to profile the client according to best recommended practices</li> </ul>
	g) Salesperson identifies a lead as "qualified" and begins the sales process to close the sale	Objective Management, Contact Management, Time Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linked to 3(a, i) to prompt the salesperson to schedule follow-up Linked to 1(f) and 3(f) to assign an appropriate process with steps to close the sale Linked to 3(d) and 7(a) to revise the forecast based on the new sales opportunity</li> </ul>
	h) Salesperson fails to make any initial contact or follow-up to a qualified lead		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linked to 7(b, c, e) to advise the sales manager of this inactivity. Linked to 3(j) to automatically add a training element into the salesperson's curriculum and schedule</li> </ul>
2. Time With the Customer	a) Salesperson interacts with the customer to build a needs analysis	Contact Management, Configurator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linked to 2(c-g) which enables the system to use the profile information to direct or limit available solutions</li> </ul>
	b) Salesperson presents product and service information (features and benefits) to the customer	Product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linked to 3(f) to identify this step of the sales process as complete</li> </ul>
	c) Salesperson configures a product and service solution for a customer	Configurator	

Fig. 21A

23/29

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2101 Component	2102 Event	2103 Related Module	2104 "Paired" Event - System Intelligence
2. Time With the Customer	d) Salesperson verifies the accuracy and applicability of the solution with business requirements and customer requirements	Configurator, Contact Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linked to 2(c), the system will prompt the salesperson for additional information to assure the best solution has been identified</li> </ul>
	e) Salesperson calculates a total cost of the solution for the customer based on quantity, discounts, taxes, programs, etc.	Quote	
	f) Salesperson identifies purchasing and financing options for the product(s) offered to the customer	Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The system marks the sales step as complete (3f), recalculates the probability of closing the sale(3d, 7a) and prompts the salesperson to accept or confirm the schedule for the follow-up (3i).</li> </ul>
	g) Salesperson identifies delivery options and timing for the solution by reviewing available inventory or manufacturing slots	Inventory	
	h) Salesperson prints a proposal for a customer	Proposal	
	i) Salesperson presents the proposed product and service solution to other decision makers at the customer	Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The system marks the sales step as complete (3f), recalculates the probability of closing the sale(3d, 7a) and prompts the salesperson to accept or confirm the schedule for the follow-up (3i).</li> </ul>
	j) <i>A salesperson frequently fails to offer creative finance options when proposing a finance payment for a product purchase</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The system adds and schedules a required product training item to the training curriculum; linked to 6(a, b)</li> </ul>
	k) <i>A salesperson's frequency of proposing a particular product or service is below the geographic or divisional norm</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The system adds and schedules a required product training item to the training curriculum; linked to 6(a, b)</li> </ul>

Fig. 21B

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2101	2102	2103	2104
Component	Event	Related Module	"Paired" Event - System Intelligence
3. Self-Management	a) Salesperson qualifies a lead and schedules a customer visit	Contact Management, Time Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linked to 1(a, g) for lead qualification, 3(f) to assign a process for closing the sale, 3(i) to schedule the process steps, and to 3(d) and 7(a) to trigger a change to the calculated forecast</li> </ul>
	b) Salesperson creates a prioritized list of contacts and customers	Objective Management	
	c) Salesperson creates a list of active sales opportunities	Objective Management, Contact Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linked with 3(d) and 7(a) to calculate a forecast</li> </ul>
	d) Salesperson develops a forecast	Forecasting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linked to all steps of the sales process and subsequently linked to 3(d) and 7(a) to calculate maintain an accurate forecast relative to process status</li> </ul>
	e) Salesperson identifies sales objectives	Objective Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linked to 3(d, f) to track against the forecast and 3(c) to check status</li> </ul>
	f) Salesperson completes planned steps of a process related to closing a sale	Objective Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linked to all steps of the sales process and subsequently linked to 3(d) and 7(a) to calculate maintain an accurate forecast relative to process status</li> </ul>
	g) Salesperson calculates commission	Forecasting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Automated by links to sales manager 7(a-d)</li> </ul>
	h) Salesperson reports sales status and contact history to sales manager	Forecasting, Contact Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linked to all aspects of the sales process</li> </ul>
	i) Salesperson and customer generate an action item (task) for follow-up	Time Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linked to 3(i), 6(b-d), and 7(e) Linked to other sales processes by systematically identifying areas for improvement and scheduling targeted training</li> </ul>
	j) Salesperson schedules time to meet training requirements	Time Management, Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linked to 2(f) to automatically identify the date of pay-off</li> </ul>
	k) Salesperson schedules a sales call follow-up for sixty days before the end of a customers financing pay-off date	Time Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The system adds and schedules a required skills training item to the training curriculum; linked to 6(a, b)</li> </ul>
	l) <i>A salesperson's length of time to close a sales is significantly longer than the norm</i>		

Fig. 21C

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2101 Component	2102 Event	2103 Related Module	2104 "Paired" Event - System Intelligence
3. Self-Management	m) <i>A salesperson's profit per sale is significantly lower than the norm</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The system adds and schedules a required skills training item to the training curriculum; linked to 6(a, b)</li> </ul>
4. Customer Retention	a) Salesperson maintains a list of customers that have purchased product b) Salesperson follows-up on customer satisfaction c) Salesperson and customer work together to set expectations and plans for next 12 months (business/purchase/support plan) d) Customer directly contacts the manufacturer regarding a product problem e) Customer brings the product to the dealer for service. f) Marketing materials are sent to customers that have purchased a particular product regarding an available upgrade	Contact Management, Order Management  Objective Management, Contact Management  Objective Management, Time Management  Contact Management  Contact Management  Contact Management, Product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linked to 5(a,b) to mark contacts and sales opportunities as current customers</li> <li>Linked to 3(f) to track recommended steps + identify new opportunities at existing customers</li> <li>Linked to 3(b) to schedule follow-up activities</li> <li>Associated with Contact Management which enables the salesperson to receive and share all information related to that customer's contact with the company - the system reacts to key events and series of events based on business rules to identify tasks</li> <li>Associated with Contact Management which enables the salesperson to receive and share all information related to that customer's contact with the company - the system reacts to key events and series of events based on business rules to identify tasks</li> <li>Linked to 5(a,b) and linked to 1(a) to identify Customer as a potential customer for upgrades for the product ordered and linked to 1(b) to automatically send out product upgrade mailing to the customer</li> </ul>
5. Order Management	a) Customer approves the proposal and signs the order b) Salesperson creates and submits an order for a particular product for a customer c) Salesperson requests a change to an order already submitted	Order Management  Order Management  Order Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The system marks the sales step as complete (3f), recalculates the probability of closing the sale(3d, 7a) and prompts the salesperson to accept or confirm the schedule for the follow-up (3i).</li> <li>Linked to 1(a) to identify Customer as a potential customer for accessories for the product ordered and linked to 1(b) to automatically send out product accessories mailing to the customer</li> <li>Linked to 2(c) to reference configuration requirements and 3(d, g) to re-forecast sales and commissions</li> </ul>

Fig. 21D

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2101 Component	2102 Event	2103 Related Module	2104 "Paired" Event - System Intelligence
5. Order Management	d) Customer requests to know delivery date for product and salesperson investigates order status	Order Management	
6. Training	a) Company's training department analyzes training requirements and develops training course and curriculum for product knowledge and skills improvement  b) Sales manager analyzes training requirements, identifies available material and assigns a plan for training requirements to a salesperson  c) Salesperson reads/reviews training material  d) Salesperson completes a certification test	Training  Sales Management, Training  Training  Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linked to 7(a-e) to evaluate training needs of salesperson and assign training elements and linked to 3(objective management and time management) to communicate, plan, and schedule the training plan</li> <li>Linked to 3 to mark the step or task as complete and to 2(all) to allow access to elements of the Time with Customer functionality that requires certification prior to use.</li> </ul>
7. Sales Management	a) A sales manager reviews a sales person's forecast and compiles totals  b) A sales manager analyzes a salesperson's close ratio and other measurement criteria  c) Sales manager reviews best practices of successful sales personnel and communicates those practices to other sales persons  d) Sales manager sets sales and territory goals for sales personnel  e) Sales manager completes performance reviews of sales personnel by reviewing accomplishments, status, and sales.	Sales Management - Forecasting  Sales Management - Forecasting, Objective Management  Objective Management  Objective Management, Forecasting  Training, Objective Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>System automatically notifies sales manager when sales persons' forecast falls behind goals</li> <li>Linked to 3(f) to assign the recommended steps as a part of the objective management process</li> <li>Linked to 3 to communicate requirements to salesperson</li> </ul>

Fig. 21E



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08/550089

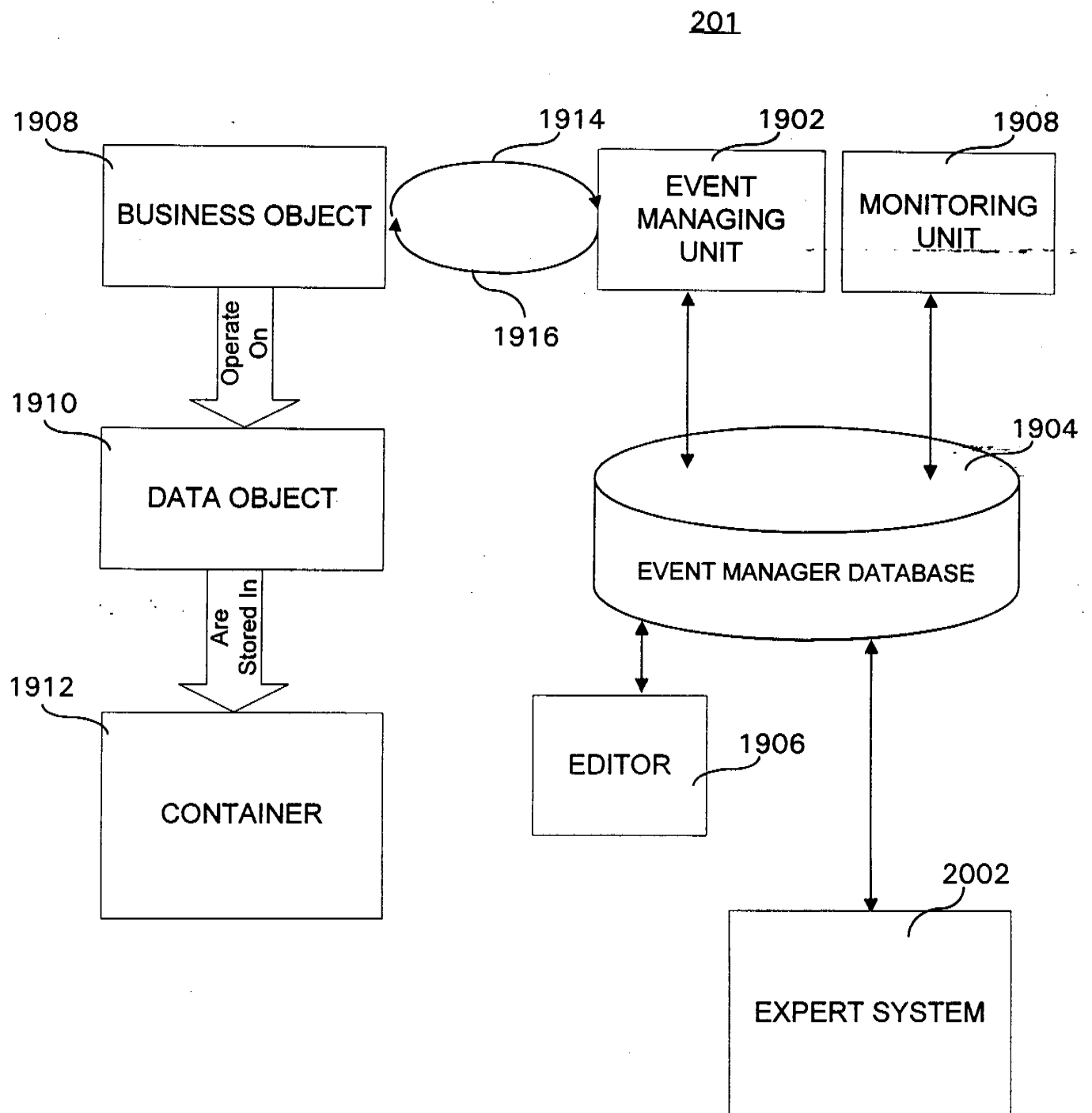


FIG. 22

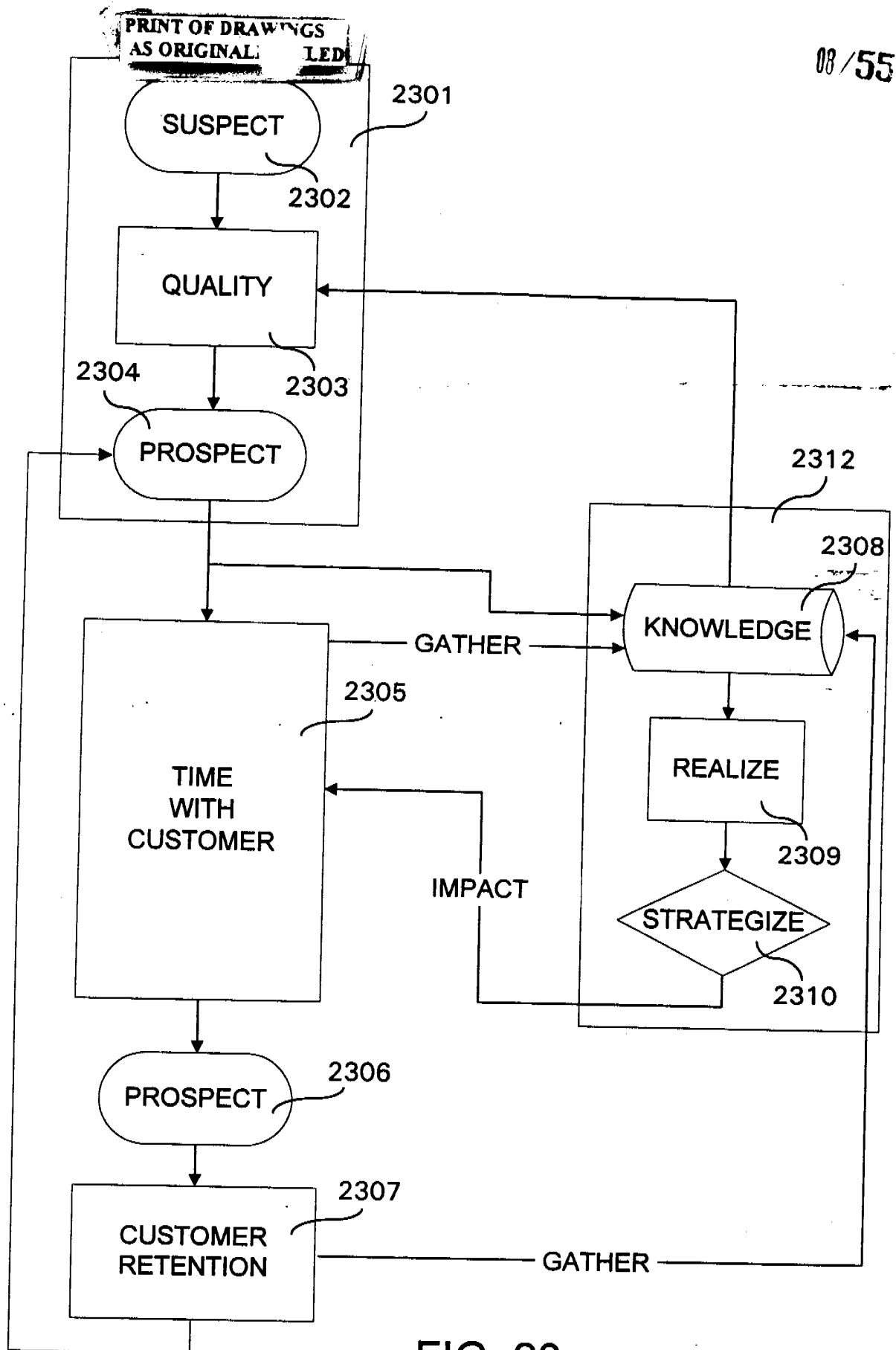


FIG. 23



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**Patent and Trademark Office**

Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS  
 Washington, D.C. 20231

375-201  
 205-205

*Tu Am B*

APPLICATION NUMBER	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED APPLICANT	ATTY. DOCKET NO./TITLE
--------------------	-------------	-----------------------	------------------------

08/550,089 10/30/95 JOHNSON

J 7709.72US01

0222/1228

MERCHANT GOULD SMITH EDELL  
 WELTER & SCHMIDT  
 3100 NORWEST CENTER  
 90 SOUTH SEVENTH STREET  
 MINNEAPOLIS MN 55402-4131

DATE MAILED:

0000

**NOTICE TO FILE MISSING PARTS OF APPLICATION**  
**FILING DATE GRANTED**

12/28/95

An Application Number and Filing Date have been assigned to this application. However, the items indicated below are missing. The required items and fees identified below must be timely submitted **ALONG WITH THE PAYMENT OF A SURCHARGE** for items 1 and 3-6 only of \$ 130 for large entities or \$ 65 for small entities who have filed a verified statement claiming such status. The surcharge is set forth in 37 CFR 1.16(e).

If all required items on this form are filed within the period set below, the total amount owed by applicant as a ☒ large entity, ☐ small entity (verified statement filed), is \$ 1070.00.

Applicant is given **ONE MONTH FROM THE DATE OF THIS LETTER, OR TWO MONTHS FROM THE FILING DATE** of this application, **WHICHEVER IS LATER**, within which to file all required items and pay any fees required above to avoid abandonment. Extensions of time may be obtained by filing a petition accompanied by the extension fee under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a).

- ☒ The statutory basic filing fee is: ☒ missing ☐ insufficient. Applicant as a ☒ large entity ☐ small entity, must submit \$ 750 to complete the basic filing fee.
- ☐ Additional claim fees of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ as a ☐ large entity, ☐ small entity, including any required multiple dependent claim fee, are required. Applicant must submit the additional claim fees or cancel the additional claims for which fees are due.
- ☐ The oath or declaration:
  - ☐ is missing.
  - ☐ does not cover items omitted at time of execution.

An oath or declaration in compliance with 37 CFR 1.63, identifying the application by the above Application Number and Filing Date is required.
- ☐ The oath or declaration does not identify the application to which it applies. An oath or declaration in compliance with 37 CFR 1.63, identifying the application by the above Application Number and Filing Date, is required.
- ☒ The signature(s) to the oath or declaration is/are: ☒ missing; ☐ by a person other than the inventor or a person qualified under 37 CFR 1.42, 1.43, or 1.47. A properly signed oath or declaration in compliance with 37 CFR 1.63, identifying the application by the above Application Number and Filing Date, is required.
- ☐ The signature of the following joint inventor(s) is missing from the oath or declaration:
 

\_\_\_\_\_ An oath or declaration listing the names of all inventors and signed by the omitted inventor(s), identifying this application by the above Application Number and Filing Date, is required.
- ☐ The application was filed in a language other than English. Applicant must file a verified English translation of the application and a fee of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ under 37 CFR 1.17(k), unless this fee has already been paid.
- ☐ A \$ \_\_\_\_\_ processing fee is required since your check was returned without payment. (37 CFR 1.21(m)).
- ☐ Your filing receipt was mailed in error because your check was returned without payment.
- ☐ The application does not comply with the Sequence Rules. See attached Notice to Comply with Sequence Rules 37 CFR 1.821-1.825.

090 RT 02/05/96 08550089

1 201

375.00 CK

090 RT 10/27/95 08550089

1 205

65.00 CK

Direct the response and any questions about this notice to, Attention: Application Processing Division, Special Processing and Correspondence Branch (703) 308-1202.

**of this notice MUST be returned with the response.**

TO BE RETURNED WITH RESPONSE


**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Patent and Trademark Office**

 Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS  
Washington, D.C. 20231

APPLICATION NUMBER	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED APPLICANT	ATTY. DOCKET NO./TITLE
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08/550,089 10/30/95 JOHNSON

J 7709.72US01

0222/1228

 MERCHANT GOULD SMITH EDELL  
WELTER & SCHMIDT  
3100 NORWEST CENTER  
90 SOUTH SEVENTH STREET  
MINNEAPOLIS MN 55402-4131

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DATE MAILED:

12/28/95

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If all required items on this form are filed within the period set below, the total amount owed by applicant as a ☒ large entity, ☐ small entity (verified statement filed), is \$ 880.

Applicant is given **ONE MONTH FROM THE DATE OF THIS LETTER, OR TWO MONTHS FROM THE FILING DATE** of this application, **WHICHEVER IS LATER**, within which to file all required items and pay any fees required above to avoid abandonment. Extensions of time may be obtained by filing a petition accompanied by the extension fee under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a).

- ☒ The statutory basic filing fee is: ☒ missing ☐ insufficient. Applicant as a ☒ large entity ☐ small entity, must submit \$ 750 to complete the basic filing fee.
- ☐ Additional claim fees of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ as a ☐ large entity, ☐ small entity, including any required multiple dependent claim fee, are required. Applicant must submit the additional claim fees or cancel the additional claims for which fees are due.
- ☐ The oath or declaration:
  - ☐ is missing.
  - ☐ does not cover items omitted at time of execution.

An oath or declaration in compliance with 37 CFR 1.63, identifying the application by the above Application Number and Filing Date is required.
- ☐ The oath or declaration does not identify the application to which it applies. An oath or declaration in compliance with 37 CFR 1.63, identifying the application by the above Application Number and Filing Date, is required.
- ☒ The signature(s) to the oath or declaration is/are: ☒ missing; ☐ by a person other than the inventor or a person qualified under 37 CFR 1.42, 1.43, or 1.47. A properly signed oath or declaration in compliance with 37 CFR 1.63, identifying the application by the above Application Number and Filing Date, is required.
- ☐ The signature of the following joint inventor(s) is missing from the oath or declaration:
 

\_\_\_\_\_ An oath or declaration listing the names of all inventors and signed by the omitted inventor(s), identifying this application by the above Application Number and Filing Date, is required.
- ☐ The application was filed in a language other than English. Applicant must file a verified English translation of the application and a fee of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ under 37 CFR 1.17(k), unless this fee has already been paid.
- ☐ A \$ \_\_\_\_\_ processing fee is required since your check was returned without payment. (37 CFR 1.21(m)).
- ☐ Your filing receipt was mailed in error because your check was returned without payment.
- ☐ The application does not comply with the Sequence Rules. See attached Notice to Comply with Sequence Rules 37 CFR 1.821-1.825.
- ☐ Other.

Starback

Direct the response and any questions about this notice to, Attention: Application Processing Division, Special Processing and Correspondence Branch (703) 308-1202.

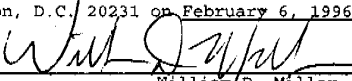
**A copy of this notice MUST be returned with the response.**

#3/Prior Art  
T. McBeth-Brown  
2/15/96  
PATENT

S/N 08/550,089

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Jerome D. Johnson et al. Examiner: N/A  
Serial No.: 08/550,089 Group Art Unit: N/A  
Filed: October 30, 1995 Docket No.: 7709.72US01  
Title: INTEGRATED COMPUTERIZED SALES FORCE AUTOMATION  
SYSTEM

CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8:  
I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited  
with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an  
envelope addressed to: Assistant Commissioner for Patents,  
Washington, D.C. 20231 on February 6, 1996,  
  
William D. Miller

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

Dear Sir:

With regard to the above-identified application, the  
items of information listed on the enclosed Form 1449 are brought  
to the attention of the Examiner.

Timing of Submission

This statement should be considered because it is submitted  
before the mailing date of a first Office Action on-the-merits,  
whichever occurred last. Accordingly, no fee is due for  
consideration of the items listed on the enclosed Form 1449,  
pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.97(b)(3).

Concise Explanation of Relevance

All of the cited documents are in English.

No representation is made that a reference is "prior art"  
within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103. Moreover,  
Applicants do not represent that a reference has been thoroughly

reviewed or that any relevance of any portion of a reference is intended, and reserve the right, pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.131 or otherwise, to establish otherwise.

Consideration of the items listed is respectfully requested. Pursuant to the provisions of M.P.E.P. 609, it is requested that the Examiner return a copy of the attached Form 1449, marked as being considered and initialled by the Examiner, to the undersigned with the next official communication.

Please charge any additional fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-2725.

Respectfully submitted,

MERCHANT, GOULD, SMITH, EDELL,  
WELTER & SCHMIDT, P.A.  
3100 Norwest Center  
90 South 7th Street  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402  
(612) 371-5310

Dated: 2/6/96

By: William D. Miller  
William D. Miller  
Reg. No. 37,988

<b>Interview Summary</b>	Application No. <b>08/550,089</b>	Applicant(s) <b>Jerome D. Johnson, et al.</b>
	Examiner <b>William Hughet</b>	Group Art Unit <b>2411</b>

All participants (applicant, applicant's representative, PTO personnel):

(1) William Hughet (3) \_\_\_\_\_

(2) William D. Miller (4) \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Interview May 28, 1997

Type: ☒ Telephonic ☐ Personal (copy is given to ☐ applicant ☐ applicant's representative).

Exhibit shown or demonstration conducted: ☐ Yes ☒ No. If yes, brief description:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Agreement ☒ was reached. ☐ was not reached.

Claim(s) discussed: \_\_\_\_\_

Identification of prior art discussed:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Description of the general nature of what was agreed to if an agreement was reached, or any other comments:  
Advised Mr. Miller that Information Disclosure Statement filed February 8, 1996 was without the actual documents. He indicated that he will locate copies and send them to me.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(A fuller description, if necessary, and a copy of the amendments, if available, which the examiner agreed would render the claims allowable must be attached. Also, where no copy of the amendments which would render the claims allowable is available, a summary thereof must be attached.)

1. ☒ It is not necessary for applicant to provide a separate record of the substance of the interview.

Unless the paragraph above has been checked to indicate to the contrary, A FORMAL WRITTEN RESPONSE TO THE LAST OFFICE ACTION IS NOT WAIVED AND MUST INCLUDE THE SUBSTANCE OF THE INTERVIEW. (See MPEP Section 713.04). If a response to the last Office action has already been filed, APPLICANT IS GIVEN ONE MONTH FROM THIS INTERVIEW DATE TO FILE A STATEMENT OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THE INTERVIEW.

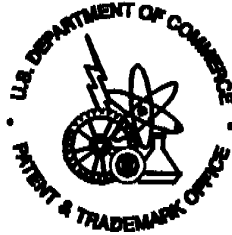
2. ☐ Since the Examiner's interview summary above (including any attachments) reflects a complete response to each of the objections, rejections and requirements that may be present in the last Office action, and since the claims are now allowable, this completed form is considered to fulfill the response requirements of the last Office action. Applicant is not relieved from providing a separate record of the interview unless box 1 above is also checked.

Examiner Note: You must sign and stamp this form unless it is an attachment to a signed Office action.

# Fax Cover Sheet

## U.S. Patent & Trademark Office

2121 Crystal Drive  
Crystal City, Virginia 22202



## Art Unit 2411

**Date:** May 29, 1997

**To:**

William D. Miller  
Merchant, Gould, Smith, Edell, Welter & Schmidt, P.A.  
(612) 332-5300  
(612) 332-9081

**From:**

William N. Hughet  
(703) 305-9770  
(703) 305-9731 (fax)

**Re:** Application No. 08/550,089  
Docket No. 7709.72USA01  
Interview summary of May 28, 1997 telephone conversation.

**Number of pages (including this cover sheet):** 2

**If you have not received all of the pages of this transmission, please contact me.**

○



S/N 08/550,089

PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Jerome D. Johnson et al. Examiner: N/A  
Serial No.: 08/550,089 Group Art Unit: N/A  
Filed: October 30, 1995 Docket No.: 7709.72US01  
Title: INTEGRATED COMPUTERIZED SALES FORCE AUTOMATION  
SYSTEM

CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8:  
I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited  
with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an  
envelope addressed to: Assistant Commissioner for Patents,  
Washington, D.C. 20231 on February 6, 1996;

*William D. Miller*  
William D. Miller

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

Dear Sir:

With regard to the above-identified application, the  
items of information listed on the enclosed Form 1449 are brought  
to the attention of the Examiner.

Timing of Submission

This statement should be considered because it is submitted  
before the mailing date of a first Office Action on-the-merits,  
whichever occurred last. Accordingly, no fee is due for  
consideration of the items listed on the enclosed Form 1449,  
pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.97(b)(3).

Concise Explanation of Relevance

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within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103. Moreover,  
Applicants do not represent that a reference has been thoroughly

reviewed or that any relevance of any portion of a reference is intended, and reserve the right, pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.131 or otherwise, to establish otherwise.

Consideration of the items listed is respectfully requested. Pursuant to the provisions of M.P.E.P. 609, it is requested that the Examiner return a copy of the attached Form 1449, marked as being considered and initialled by the Examiner, to the undersigned with the next official communication.

Please charge any additional fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-2725.

Respectfully submitted,

MERCHANT, GOULD, SMITH, EDELL,  
WELTER & SCHMIDT, P.A.  
3100 Norwest Center  
90 South 7th Street  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402  
(612) 371-5310

Dated: 2/6/96

By: William D. Miller  
William D. Miller  
Reg. No. 37,988

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant:	JOHNSON et al.	Examiner:	W. Hughet
Serial No.:	08/550,089	Group Art Unit:	2411
Filed:	Oct. 30, 1995	Docket:	7709.72US01
Notice of Allow. Date:	n/a	Batch No.:	n/a
Due Date:	n/a		
Title:	INTEGRATED COMPUTERIZED SALES FORCE AUTOMATION SYSTEM		

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Attn: Examiner William Hughet  
Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

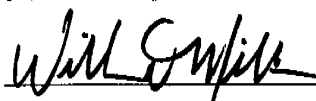
Sir:

We are transmitting herewith the attached:

- ☒ Transmittal Sheet in duplicate containing Certificate of Mailing
- ☒ Other: Communication and Resubmission of Information Disclosure Statement, PTO-1449 and cited art

Please consider this a PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME for a sufficient number of months to enter these papers, if appropriate. Please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-2725. A duplicate of this sheet is enclosed.

MERCHANT, GOULD, SMITH, EDELL,  
WELTER & SCHMIDT  
3100 Norwest Center, Minneapolis, MN 55402  
(612) 332-5300

By:   
Name: William D. Miller  
Reg. No.: 37,988  
WDM/PST/dhr

(PTO TRANSMITTAL - GENERAL)

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant:	JOHNSON et al.	Examiner:	W. Hughet
Serial No.:	08/550,089	Group Art Unit:	2411
Filed:	Oct. 30, 1995	Docket:	7709.72US01
Notice of Allow. Date:	n/a	Batch No.:	n/a
Due Date:	n/a		
Title:	INTEGRATED COMPUTERIZED SALES FORCE AUTOMATION SYSTEM		

---

Attn: Examiner William Hughet  
Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231


Sir:

We are transmitting herewith the attached:

- ☒ Transmittal Sheet in duplicate containing Certificate of Mailing
- ☒ Other: Communication and Resubmission of Information Disclosure Statement, PTO-1449 and cited art

Please consider this a PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME for a sufficient number of months to enter these papers, if appropriate. Please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-2725. A duplicate of this sheet is enclosed.

MERCHANT, GOULD, SMITH, EDELL,  
WELTER & SCHMIDT  
3100 Norwest Center, Minneapolis, MN 55402  
(612) 332-5300

By:   
Name: William D. Miller  
Reg. No.: 37,988  
WDM/PST/dhr

(PTO TRANSMITTAL - GENERAL)

S/N 08/550,089

PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant:	JOHNSON et al.	Examiner:	W. Hughet
Serial No.:	08/550,089	Group Art Unit:	2411
Filed:	Oct. 30, 1995	Docket No.:	7709.72US01
Title:	INTEGRATED COMPUTERIZED SALES FORCE AUTOMATION SYSTEM		

---

COMMUNICATION

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Attention: Examiner William Hughet  
Washington, D.C. 20231

Dear Sir:

Further a teleconference of May 28, 1997, between Examiner William Hughet and the undersigned Applicants' Representative, and in response to the Interview Summary of May 28, 1997, Applicants' Representatives enclose a resubmission of the Information Disclosure Statement and PTO-1449 filed with the United States Patent and Trademark Office on February 6, 1996, with enclosure of the cited prior art.

Applicants' Representatives also enclose a copy of the postcard date-stamped February 8, 1996, which indicates USPTO receipt of the Information Disclosure Statement, Form 1449 and cited references.

The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' Representatives, at the below listed telephone number, if it is believed the prosecution of this application may be assisted thereby.


Respectfully submitted,

J. JOHNSON et al.

By their Representatives,

MERCHANT, GOULD, SMITH, EDELL,  
WELTER & SCHMIDT, P.A.  
3100 Norwest Center  
90 South Seventh Street  
Minneapolis, MN 55402  
612/332-5300

By

  
William D. Miller  
Reg. No. 37,988  
WDM/PST/dhr



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Patent and Trademark Office**

Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS  
Washington, D.C. 20231

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
08/550,089	10/30/95	JOHNSON	J 7709.72US01


┌  
MERCHANT GOULD SMITH EDELL  
WELTER & SCHMIDT  
3100 NORWEST CENTER  
90 SOUTH SEVENTH STREET  
MINNEAPOLIS MN 55402-4131

B3M1/0610 ┐

EXAMINER	
HUGHET, W	
ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2411	
DATE MAILED: 06/10/97	

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

**Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks**

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No. <b>08/550,089</b>	Applicant(s) <b>D. Johnson, David R. Lundberg, Michael P. Krel</b>	
	Examiner <b>William Hughet</b>	Group Art Unit <b>2411</b>	

☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on Oct 30, 1995

☐ This action is **FINAL**.

☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, **prosecution as to the merits is closed** in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

A shortened statutory period for response to this action is set to expire 3 month(s), or thirty days, whichever is longer, from the mailing date of this communication. Failure to respond within the period for response will cause the application to become abandoned. (35 U.S.C. § 133). Extensions of time may be obtained under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a).

**Disposition of Claims**

☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.

Of the above, claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.

☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.

☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.

☐ Claims \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

☒ See the attached Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948.

☒ The drawing(s) filed on Oct 30, 1995 is/are objected to by the Examiner.

☐ The proposed drawing correction, filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is ☐ approved ☐ disapproved.

☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).

☐ All ☐ Some\* ☐ None of the CERTIFIED copies of the priority documents have been

☐ received.

☐ received in Application No. (Series Code/Serial Number) \_\_\_\_\_

☐ received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\*Certified copies not received: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

**Attachment(s)**

☒ Notice of References Cited, PTO-892

☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). 5

☐ Interview Summary, PTO-413

☒ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948

☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152

--- SEE OFFICE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES ---



Serial Number: 08/550,089  
Art Unit: 2411

-2-

### **Part III DETAILED ACTION**

#### ***Drawings***

1. This application has been filed with informal drawings which are acceptable for examination purposes only. Formal drawings will be required when the application is allowed.
2. The drawings are objected to because of irregularities as noted on PTO 948, enclosed. Appropriate correction is required.

#### ***Claim Objections***

3. Claim 11 is objected to regarding duplication of the phrase, "for use in".

#### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

4. Claims 14 - 16 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

(A) Claim 14 depends back to itself. Applicants likely intended Claim 14 to depend back to Claim 13, and the application has been examined on this basis.

(B) Claim 14 recites determining whether an event has occurred prior to the first event, the latter being recited in Claim 13. However, the Examiner asserts that, by definition, a first event is the beginning event of the sales process and cannot be preceded by a prior event.

(C) Claims 15 and 16 depend on Claim 14 and recite a first and second subsystem. However, Claim 14 does not recite a first or second subsystem, so there is insufficient antecedent basis for these limitations in Claims 15 and 16.. Applicants likely intended these claims to depend on Claim 13, and the Examiner has reviewed the application on this basis.

Serial Number: 08/550,089  
Art Unit: 2411

-3-

(D) Claim 18 depends on Claim 19. Applicants likely intended Claim 18 to depend back to Claim 17, and the application has been examined on this basis.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. § 103 which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Subject matter developed by another person, which qualifies as prior art only under subsection (f) or (g) of section 102 of this title, shall not preclude patentability under this section where the subject matter and the claimed invention were, at the time the invention was made, owned by the same person or subject to an obligation of assignment to the same person.

6. Claims 1 - 8 and 10 - 20 are rejected under 35 USC § 103 as being unpatentable over Tom Negrino, "Sales-Automation Software", Macworld, v 10, n 10, pages 144 - 148, October, 1993 (hereinafter "Negrino") in view of Tony Seideman, "Way Cool! (Sales Force Automation)", Sales & Marketing Management, v 146, n 6, pages 10 - 13, June, 1994 (hereinafter "Seideman"), and further in view of John Hiatt, "Empowering the Global Sales Force", International Business, v 7, n 9, pages 16 - 20, September, 1994 (hereinafter "Hiatt").

(A) As to Claim 1, Negrino discloses a computer-based sales automation system that is used to facilitate a sales process. Negrino teaches a plurality of subsystems, each corresponding to a step in the sales process and each facilitating that

Serial Number: 08/550,089  
Art Unit: 2411

-4-

respective sales step. Negrino also discloses an automated branching, or event, manager that automatically initiates the next step in the automated sales process based on recognition of occurrence of a prior step.

Negrino differs from the invention by not expressly teaching the sequence of subsystems being initiated as "first" followed by "second". However, the Examiner asserts that both Negrino and the invention teach a sequence of logical steps, each initiated as a result of a prior step and that by arbitrarily designating a particular step as "first", it would follow that the next step initiated by the system would be the "second" step. It would therefore have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of sales force automation systems to denote an initial sales subsystem step as "first", to be followed by a successive subsystem step designated "second" in order to identify the relative sequence between the two subsystem steps.

(B) As to Claim 2 and 3, Negrino discloses that the context in which the current (recognized) task (event) occurs is a function of the occurrence of a prior event. Although Negrino does not expressly disclose available information related to a given step, it does disclose the automatic logging of information upon occurrence of events. The Examiner asserts that in order to log such information, the contextual environment of each step must necessarily include the related information which the system subsequently records in a central database. The Examiner further asserts that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include information with respect to occurrence of a previous step in the automated sales/branching system disclosed by Negrino. One would be motivated to do so in order to have sufficient information with which to verify that the prior step had satisfactorily completed prior to initiating the subsequent step.

(C) As to Claim 4, while Negrino does not teach a rule-based sales automation system, Seideman does disclose an expert sales automation system in

Serial Number: 08/550,089  
Art Unit: 2411

-5-

which rules direct the next recommended action to be taken, upon occurrence of a given event or step. Although Seideman does not expressly disclose storing a plurality of rules, expert systems are well known to be comprised of a stored knowledge base of rules in conjunction with an inference engine that enables the system to make decisions and direct actions based on contextual knowledge (information) and rules defined by experts in the field. See Computer Dictionary, Microsoft Press, 156, (Second Ed., 1994).

Although Seideman does not disclose identifying an express rule governing response to an event, the Examiner asserts that expert systems are well known to initiate a subsequent step upon being provided a relevant knowledge base and contextual information regarding the present event. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Negrino with the expert system of Seideman. One would be motivated to do so in order to incorporate the well-known dynamic learning means of expert systems into the sales automation system of Negrino, and thereby permit Negrino's system to solve problems and initiate events based on the experience and rules of experts with minimal manual intervention.

(D) As to Claim 5, Negrino teaches an initial event of spending time with a customer in the form of learning about the prospect's needs and making a sales presentation, with the intent of converting an initial lead into a closed sale. Negrino further discloses a lead management subsystem. Although Negrino does not expressly teach using the lead management subsystem in converting a name to a potential customer, the Examiner asserts that a primary goal of a sales system is to make a sale, which necessarily requires converting initial leads, or prospects, into buying customers.

(E) As to Claim 6, while Negrino does not teach an order management system for ensuring that the ordered product or service is delivered, Hiatt discloses a sales automation system that provides for automatic entry of orders and subsequent

Serial Number: 08/550,089  
Art Unit: 2411

-6-

shipment of flawless orders to the customer. It would have been obvious to modify Negrino with the order management subsystem of Hiatt in order to ensure timely and accurate order shipments. One would be motivated to do so in order to deliver that which was promised to the customer and in order to preserve the order. The remaining limitations of Claim 6 are found in Claim 5, and the remainder of this claim is rejected for the same reasons.

(F) As to Claim 7, Negrino discloses a customer retention subsystem that includes post-sale contacts, letters, and meetings with clients for building a relationship with an existing customer for future sales. The remaining limitations of Claim 6 are found in Claim 5, and the remainder of this claim is rejected for the same reasons.

(G) As to Claim 8, Negrino teaches a self management subsystem of customer contact management, to-do lists, calendars, and schedulers for assisting the salesperson in fulfilling his/her sales responsibilities. The remaining limitations of Claim 6 are found in Claim 5, and the remainder of this claim is rejected for the same reasons.

(H) As to Claim 10, Negrino teaches a sales management subsystem that includes sales plans that implement enterprise-wide strategies and means for implementing said plans. The remaining limitations of Claim 6 are found in Claim 5, and the remainder of this claim is rejected for the same reasons.

(I) The limitations of Claim 11 are found in Claims 6 and 8, and this claim is rejected for the same reasons.

(J) The limitations of Claim 12 are found in Claims 5 and 8, and this claim is rejected for the same reasons.

(K) As to Claim 13, and as discussed above regarding Claim 1, while Negrino does not expressly teach facilitating a first event within a first subsystem of a computer-based system, it does teach an automated, computer-based sales system that

Serial Number: 08/550,089  
Art Unit: 2411

-7-

spells out every step of the sales process and directs subsequent steps based on the outcome of the immediately previous step. The Examiner asserts that any such sequence of steps within a plurality of subsystems as disclosed by Negrino necessarily has a beginning, or first, step and beginning, or first, subsystem. Otherwise, Negrino would have no starting point from which the sales process would be facilitated as taught within the Negrino publication. The remaining limitations of Claim 13 are found in Claim 1, and the remainder of this claim is rejected for the same reasons.

(L) As to Claim 14, and as discussed above regarding Claims 2 and 3, Negrino teaches performance of events based on the occurrence of prior events. Although Negrino does not expressly disclose determining whether or not such prior events occurred, the Examiner asserts that such a determination would have been obvious prior to the initiation of a subsequent, dependent event. To do otherwise, would render the sequential dependency of events as disclosed by Negrino meaningless. Although Negrino does not disclose determining whether the prior event was part of the context of the first event, the Examiner asserts that recitation of "first" event is merely selection of one of a plurality of possible events within the sales process. The remaining limitations of Claim 14 are found in Claims 2 and 3, and the remainder of this claim is rejected for the same reasons.

(M) The limitations of Claim 15 are found in Claims 1 and 6, and this claim is rejected for the same reasons.

(N) The limitations of Claim 16 are found in Claims 1 and 5, and this claim is rejected for the same reasons.

(O) As to Claim 17, and as discussed above regarding Claim 1 and 4, Negrino discloses a computer-based sales automation system that is used to facilitate the sales process. Although Negrino does not teach "electronically" facilitating sales events, Negrino does disclose use of computers with which to direct events, and the

Serial Number: 08/550,089  
Art Unit: 2411

-8-

Examiner asserts that computers are well known to be powered by electricity. While Negrino does not expressly disclose linking to subsequent steps based on prior experience, it does disclose linking to subsequent steps based on the occurrence of prior steps. Also, Seideman teaches incorporating prior sales experience with which to direct the operation of the automated system. It would have been obvious to modify Negrino with the experience means of Seideman. One would be motivated to do so to take advantage of existing practical knowledge within the sales process so as to avoid prior mistakes and to use past successful sequences of events and subsystems with which to close a sale. The remaining limitations of Claim 17 are found in Claims 1 and 4, and the remainder of this claim is rejected for the same reasons.

(P) As to Claims 18,19, and 20, although Negrino does not disclose an expert system, Seideman does disclose an expert sales automation system that uses prior sales experience with which to build rules to drive the system. As discussed above regarding Claim 4, expert systems are well known to be comprised of knowledge bases of rules that represents expert experience in the field, and Seideman teaches learning from the sales process so as to implement strategies that will work best and further teaches guiding the system to direct the most efficient courses of action. Although Seideman does not expressly disclose monitoring sales process events, the Examiner asserts that it would have been obvious, in view of Seideman, for an expert system to monitor those events comprising the system so as to "learn" what works and what leads to undesirable results and incorporate that knowledge in the expert system's well-known knowledge base. It would have been obvious to modify Negrino with the expert system of Seideman for the reasons discussed regarding claim 4.

7. Claim 9 is rejected under 35 USC § 103 as being unpatentable over Tom Negrino, "Sales-Automation Software", Macworld, v 10, n 10, pages 144 - 148,

Serial Number: 08/550,089  
Art Unit: 2411

-9-

October, 1993 (hereinafter "Negrino") in view of Colleen Frye, "Automation Integrating Phases of Sales Cycle", Software Magazine, v 13, n 14, pages 61 - 72, September, 1993 (hereinafter "Frye").

(A) As to Claim 9, Negrino discloses a computer-based sales automation system that is used to facilitate the sales process, said system being comprised of a plurality of subsystems, each corresponding to a step in the sales process and each facilitating that respective sales step. Although Negrino does not teach a training subsystem, Frye does disclose a sales force automation system in which the users (salespersons) are trained on the system. Although Frye is not clear whether or not the system actually does the training, the Examiner asserts that, in view of Frye and the well-known benefits that accrue from a well-trained staff, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of sales automation systems to provide for system-directed training of salespersons. One would be motivated to do so in order to take advantage of the automation and the knowledge (rules) built into the system to detect the progress of each individual salesperson and to provide training information relevant to his/her particular experience level and products being sold. One would be further motivated to do so to automatically load updated product information into the databases disclosed by Negrino and Frye to provide the salespersons with up to date information.

#### *Conclusion*

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to William Hughet, whose telephone number is (703) 305-9770. The examiner can be reached on Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



Serial Number: 08/550,089  
Art Unit: 2411

-10-


If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gail Hayes, can be reached at (703) 305-9711. The fax phone number for this Group is (703) 305-9731.

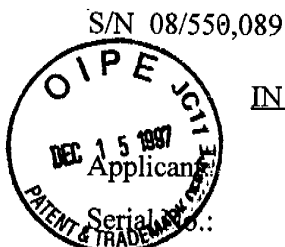
Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-3900.

William N. Hughet

June 04, 1997

(08550089.AC1)

  
GAIL O. HAYES  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
GROUP 2400



PATENT # 7

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant:	Johnson et al.	Examiner:	W. Hughet
Serial No.:	08/550,089	Group Art Unit:	2411
Filed:	October 30, 1995	Docket No.:	7709.72US01
Title:	INTEGRATED COMPUTERIZED SALES FORCE AUTOMATION SYSTEM		

CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8:

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231 on December 10, 1997.

Susan Creek

PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

Dear Sir:

In accordance with the provisions of 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a), it is respectfully requested that a 3-month extension of time be granted in which to respond to the outstanding Office Action mailed June 10, 1997, said period of response being extended from September 10, 1997 to December 10, 1997.

Our check in the amount of \$475.00 is enclosed to cover the required extension fee for a small entity.

2/1997 BALEXAND 00000034 08550089  
1:217 475.00 QP

Respectfully submitted,  
Merchant, Gould, Smith, Edell,  
Welter & Schmidt, P.A.  
3100 Norwest Center  
90 South Seventh Street  
Minneapolis, MN 55402  
612/332-5300

Dated: 12/10/97, 1997

By:   
John P. Sumner  
Reg. No. 29,114  
JPS:PST:slc

S/N 08/550,089

PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant:	JOHNSON et al.	Examiner:	W. Hughet
Serial No.:	08/550,089	Group Art Unit:	Unassigned
Filed:	Oct. 30, 1995	Docket No.:	7709.72US01
Title:	INTEGRATED COMPUTERIZED SALES FORCE AUTOMATION SYSTEM		

---

COURTESY COPY OF INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT,  
FORM 1449 AND CITED REFERENCES  
submitted on February 6, 1996

Receipt is hereby acknowledged for the following in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office:

Applicant: Jerome D. Johnson et al.  
Serial No.: 08/550,089  
Filed: October 30, 1995  
Docket: 7709.72US01  
Title: INTEGRATED COMPUTERIZED SALES FORCE AUTOMATION SYSTEM  
Small entity status has been previously submitted  
Information Disclosure Statement, Form 1449 and cited references.  
Transmittal Sheet, in duplicate, containing certificate under 37 CFR 1.8

WDM:bkh  
Patent

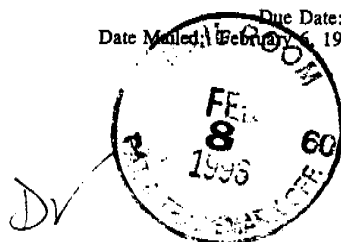
Due Date: -  
Date Mailed: February 6, 1996

Receipt is hereby acknowledged for the following in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office:

Applicant: Jerome D. Johnson et al.  
Serial No.: 08/550,089  
Filed: October 30, 1995  
Docket: 7709.72US01  
Title: INTEGRATED COMPUTERIZED SALES FORCE AUTOMATION SYSTEM  
Small entity status has been previously submitted  
Information Disclosure Statement, Form 1449 and cited references.  
Transmittal Sheet, in duplicate, containing certificate under 37 CFR 1.8

WDM:bkh  
Patent

Due Date: -  
Date Mailed: February 6, 1996



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant:	Jerome D. Johnson et al.	Examiner:	N/A
Serial No.:	08/550,089	Group Art Unit:	N/A
Filed:	October 30, 1995	Docket:	7709.72US01
Notice of Allow. Date:	N/A	Batch No.:	N/A
Title:	INTEGRATED COMPUTERIZED SALES FORCE AUTOMATION SYSTEM		

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

We are transmitting herewith the attached:

## CLAIMS AS AMENDED

CLAIMS REMAINING AFTER AMENDMENT		HIGHEST NUMBER PREVIOUSLY PAID FOR		PRESENT EXTRA		RATE		FEE
TOTAL CLAIMS:	-		=		x	\$	=	\$
INDEPENDENT CLAIMS:	-		=		x	\$	=	\$
MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM FEE								\$
TOTAL FILING FEE								\$

Small entity status has been previously submitted

Information Disclosure Statement, Form 1449 and cited references.

Return postcard

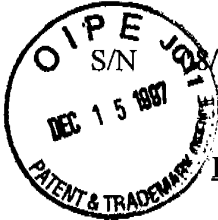
Please consider this a **PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME** for a sufficient number of months to enter these papers and please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-2725. A duplicate of this sheet is enclosed.

**CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8:** The undersigned hereby certifies that this Transmittal Letter and the paper, as described hereinabove, are being deposited in the United States Postal Service, as first class mail, in an envelope addressed to: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231, on this 6th day of February, 1996.

**MERCHANT, GOULD, SMITH, EDELL, WELTER & SCHMIDT**  
3100 Norwest Center, 90 South Seventh Street  
Minneapolis, MN 55402-4131  
(612) 332-5200

By: William D. Miller  
Name: William D. Miller  
Reg. No.: 37,988  
WDM:bkh

(GENERAL)



08/550,089

PATENT

8/16  
pah  
12-30

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant:	Johnson et al.	Examiner:	W. Hughet
Serial No.:	08/550,089	Group Art Unit:	2411
Filed:	October 30, 1995	Docket No.:	7709.72US01
Title:	INTEGRATED COMPUTERIZED SALES FORCE AUTOMATION SYSTEM		

CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8: The undersigned hereby certifies that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service, as first class mail, in an envelope addressed to: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231, on December 10, 1997

By: [Signature]  
Name: Susan Creek

AMENDMENT

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

This Amendment is submitted in response to the non-final Office Action dated  
June 10, 1997.

Please amend the above-identified application as follows.

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Page 3, line 13, delete "proces", insert --process-- therefor.

Page 6, line 22, delete "is", insert --are-- therefor.

Page 34, line 34, delete "effect", insert --affect-- therefor.

Page 38, line 14, delete "are", insert --is-- therefor.

Page 47, line 3, delete "mangers", insert --managers-- therefor.

Page 61, line 1, delete "paring", insert --pairing-- therefor.

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (AMENDED) A computer implemented sales system used to facilitate a sales process, the system comprising:

125 a plurality of subsystems configured to facilitate [each corresponding to a phase of the sales process and facilitating] one or more actions performed during [events occurring in] at least one [the corresponding] phase of the sales process; and

an event manager, coupled to [each of] the subsystems, the event manager detecting one or more changes in state characteristic of [recognizing] an event occurring within the system [carried out by a first subsystem of the plurality of subsystems],

inferring occurrence of the event and [determining] a context in which the [recognized] event occurred based at least in part on the detected changes in state [occurs], and

automatically initiating an operation in one or more particular [a second] subsystems of the computer [plurality of subsystems] to facilitate a new action [event] based on the inferred context [in which the recognized event occurs].

2. (AMENDED) A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the inferred context [in which the recognized event occurs] includes information related to at least one [a] phase of the sales process [in which the recognized event occurs].

3. (AMENDED) A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the inferred context [in which the recognized event occurs] includes information related to whether a previous event has occurred in the sales process.

4. (AMENDED) A system as recited in claim 1, further comprising:  
a first memory storing a plurality of rules, each rule indicating at least one subsequent action to be taken by a subsystem of the sales system upon occurrence of a corresponding event occurring in a particular context; and

a decision subsystem configured to [means for] identify[ing] a rule stored in said first memory corresponding to the inferred context [in which the recognized event occurred] and for initiating the operation in the particular [second] subsystem based on the identified rule.

5. (AMENDED) A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the plurality of [first] subsystems comprises:

a time with customer subsystem configured to convert [for use in converting] a lead to a buying customer, so as to close [thereby closing] a sale;[,] and



[the second subsystem comprises] a lead generation [management] subsystem configured to convert [for use in converting] a name to a potential customer.

6. (AMENDED) A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the plurality of [first] subsystems comprises;

a time with customer subsystem configured to convert [for use in converting] a lead to a buying customer, so as to close [thereby closing] a sale;[,] and

[the second subsystem comprises] an order management subsystem configured to convert [for use in converting] the sale such that a product or service delivered matches a product or service sold.

7. (AMENDED) A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the plurality of [first] subsystems comprises;

a time with customer subsystem configured to convert [for use in converting] a lead to a buying customer, so as to close [thereby closing] a sale;[,] and

[the second subsystem comprises] a customer retention subsystem configured to convert [for use in converting] an existing customer into a lead, so as to generate [thereby gaining] repeat sales.

8. (AMENDED) A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the plurality of [first] subsystems comprises;

a time with customer subsystem configured to convert [for use in converting] a lead to a buying customer and prompting the buying customer to make a buying decision, so as to close [thereby closing] a sale;[,] and

[the second subsystem comprises] a self management subsystem configured to assist [for use in assisting] a salesperson in managing [their own] sales information.

9. (AMENDED) A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the plurality of [first] subsystems comprises;

51 a time with customer subsystem configured to convert [for use in converting] a lead to a buying customer, so as to close [thereby closing] a sale;[,] and

[the second subsystem comprises] a training subsystem configured to provide [for use in providing] training to a salesperson.

10. (AMENDED) A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the plurality of [first] subsystems comprises;

a time with customer subsystem configured to convert [for use in converting] a lead to a buying customer, so as to close [thereby closing] a sale;[,] and

[the second subsystem comprises] a sales management subsystem configured to assist [for use in assisting] a sales manager in managing a plurality of salespeople.

11. (AMENDED) A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the plurality of [first] subsystems comprises:

an order management subsystem configured to ensure [for use in for use in ensuring] that a product or service delivered matches a product or service sold; and

[the second subsystem comprises] a self management subsystem configured to assist [for use in assisting] a salesperson in managing [their own] sales information.

12. (AMENDED) A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the plurality of [first] subsystems comprises:

a lead management subsystem configured to manage a conversion of a lead to a prospect and of the prospect to a buying customer [for use in converting a lead to a customer]; and

[the second subsystem comprises] a self management subsystem configured to assist [for use in assisting] a salesperson in managing [their own] sales information.

20  
13. (AMENDED) A method of facilitating a sales process using a computer arrangement having [configured to have] a plurality of subsystems configured to facilitate one or more actions performed during at least one [, each corresponding to a] phase of the sales process[, in order to facilitate an event occurring in a related phase of the sales process], the method comprising the steps of:

[(a) facilitating a first event occurring in the sales process using a first subsystem of the computer;]

91 [(b)] automatically detecting one or more changes in state characteristic of an [the occurrence of the first] event occurring in the sales process; [and]

inferring occurrence of the event and [determining] a context in which the [first] event occurred based at least in part on the detected changes in state; and

[(c)] automatically initiating an operation in one or more particular [a second] subsystems of the computer to facilitate a new action [event] based on the inferred context [in which the first event occurred].

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14. (AMENDED) A method as recited in claim 13, further comprising [14, wherein the determining step (b) comprises] the steps of:

determining whether a prescribed event [has previously] occurred in the [a] sales process [event] prior to [occurrence of] the inferred [first] event; and

indicating as at least part of the inferred context whether the prescribed event has previously occurred [as at least part of the context in which the first event occurred].

<sup>22</sup>  
~~15.~~ (AMENDED) A method as recited in claim <sup>20</sup>~~13~~, further comprising the steps  
of: [14, wherein the first subsystem is used to facilitate]

inferring the occurrence of an event [occurring] while a salesperson is with a  
customer; and

using the particular [second] subsystem [is used] to facilitate an action taken  
[event occurring] while managing an order made by [with] the customer.

<sup>23</sup>  
G ~~16.~~ (AMENDED) A method as recited in claim <sup>20</sup>~~13~~, further comprising the steps  
of: [14, wherein the first subsystem is used to facilitate]

inferring occurrence of an event [occurring] while converting a name into a  
customer; and

using the particular [second] subsystem [is used] to facilitate an action taken  
[event occurring] while a salesperson is with the customer.

<sup>40</sup>  
~~17.~~ (AMENDED) A computer implemented sales system used to facilitate a  
sales process, the system comprising:

a plurality of subsystems configured to [each] electronically facilitate actions  
performed during [facilitating an event occurring in] the sales process; and

an event manager coupled to [each of] the [plurality of] subsystems and  
configured to

detect one or more changes in state characteristic of an event  
occurring in the system.

infer [detect the] occurrence of the [a first] event [in the sales process] and a context in which the event occurred based at least in part on the detected changes in state,

[to] link the inferred [first] event [in the sales process] with an action to be performed during [a second event in] the sales process based on prior sales experience using the sales system, and

[to] automatically initiate an operation using one or more of the plurality of subsystems to facilitate the action to be performed based on the inferred context [second event].

41  
18. (AMENDED) A system as recited in claim ~~17~~<sup>40</sup> [19], wherein the event manager comprises an expert system.

42  
19. (AMENDED) A system as recited in claim ~~17~~<sup>40</sup> [19], wherein the event manager comprises an expert system configured [provided] to

automatically monitor events occurring in the sales process,

[to] identify which events lead to a desired outcome in a use of the sales system, and

[to] produce a knowledge database for use in subsequent operations as the prior sales experience using the sales system.

<sup>45</sup>  
~~20.~~ (AMENDED) A system as recited in claim <sup>42</sup>~~19~~ [20], wherein the expert system comprises:

a knowledge database configured to store [storing] information related to the prior sales experience using the sales system;

means for realizing an [the] implication of the information stored in the knowledge database; and

means for strategizing a desirable subsequent action based on the implication of the information stored, wherein the operation automatically initiated by the event manager carries out the desirable subsequent action.

(Please add the following new claims.)

<sup>16</sup>  
~~21.~~ (NEW) A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the inferred event is the occurrence of a phase of the sales process.

<sup>14</sup>  
~~22.~~ (NEW) A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the inferred event is distributed among at least two of the plurality of subsystems.

<sup>15</sup> <sup>14</sup>  
~~23.~~ (NEW) A system as recited in claim ~~22~~, wherein the inferred context includes information related to the subsystems among which the inferred event is distributed.

<sup>16</sup> <sup>15</sup>  
~~24.~~ (NEW) A system as recited in claim ~~23~~, wherein the inferred context includes an identification of the subsystems among which the inferred event is distributed.

<sup>17</sup>  
~~25.~~ (NEW) A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the inferred event is contained within one of the plurality of subsystems.

<sup>18</sup> <sup>19</sup>  
~~26.~~ (NEW) A system as recited in claim ~~25~~, wherein the inferred context includes information related to the subsystem in which the inferred event is contained.

<sup>19</sup> <sup>18</sup>  
~~27.~~ (NEW) A system as recited in claim ~~26~~, wherein the inferred context includes an identification of the subsystem in which the inferred event is contained.

<sup>24</sup> <sup>20</sup>  
~~28.~~ (NEW) A method as recited in claim ~~13~~, wherein the inferred context includes information related to at least one phase of the sales process.

<sup>25</sup> <sup>20</sup>  
~~29.~~ (NEW) A method as recited in claim ~~13~~, wherein the inferred event is the occurrence of a phase of the sales process.

<sup>26</sup> <sup>20</sup>  
~~30.~~ (NEW) A method as recited in claim ~~13~~, wherein the inferred event is distributed among at least two of the plurality of subsystems.

<sup>27</sup> <sup>26</sup>  
~~31.~~ (NEW) A method as recited in claim ~~30~~, wherein the inferred context includes information related to the subsystems among which the inferred event is distributed.



<sup>28</sup>  
~~32.~~ (NEW) A method as recited in claim <sup>29</sup>31, wherein the inferred context includes an identification of the subsystems among which the inferred event is distributed.

<sup>29</sup>  
~~33.~~ (NEW) A method as recited in claim <sup>26</sup>13, wherein the inferred event is contained within one of the plurality of subsystems.

<sup>30</sup>  
~~34.~~ (NEW) A method as recited in claim <sup>29</sup>33, wherein the inferred context includes information related to the subsystem in which the inferred event is contained.

<sup>31</sup>  
~~35.~~ (NEW) A method as recited in claim <sup>30</sup>34, wherein the inferred context includes an identification of the subsystem in which the inferred event is contained.

<sup>32</sup>  
~~36.~~ (NEW) A method as recited in claim <sup>30</sup>13, further comprising the steps of:  
storing a plurality of rules in a memory, each rule indicating at least one subsequent action to be taken by a subsystem of the sales system upon occurrence of a corresponding event occurring in a particular context; and  
identifying a rule corresponding to the inferred context; and  
initiating the operation in the particular subsystem based on the identified rule.

<sup>33</sup>  
~~37.~~ (NEW) A method as recited in claim <sup>30</sup>13, further comprising the steps of:  
inferring occurrence of an event while converting a name to a potential customer;  
and

using the particular subsystem to convert a lead to a customer.

<sup>34</sup>  
~~38.~~ (NEW) A method as recited in claim <sup>20</sup>~~13~~, further comprising the steps of:

inferring occurrence of an event while converting a lead to a buying customer; and

using the particular subsystem to convert an existing customer into a lead, so as to generate repeat sales.

<sup>35</sup>  
~~39.~~ (NEW) A method as recited in claim <sup>20</sup>~~13~~, further comprising the steps of:

inferring occurrence of an event while converting a lead to a buying customer and

prompting the buying customer to make a buying decision; and

using the particular subsystem to assist a salesperson in managing sales information.

<sup>36</sup>  
~~40.~~ (NEW) A method as recited in claim <sup>20</sup>~~13~~, further comprising the steps of:

inferring occurrence of an event while converting a lead to a buying customer; and

using the particular subsystem to provide training to a salesperson.

<sup>37</sup>  
~~41.~~ (NEW) A method as recited in claim <sup>20</sup>~~13~~, further comprising the steps of:

inferring occurrence of an event while converting a lead to a buying customer; and

using the particular subsystem to assist a sales manager in managing a plurality of salespeople.

<sup>38</sup>  
~~42.~~ (NEW) A method as recited in claim <sup>20</sup>~~13~~, further comprising the steps of:

inferring occurrence of an event while ensuring that a product or service delivered matches a product or service sold; and

using the particular subsystem to assist a salesperson in managing sales information.

39  
43.

(NEW) A method as recited in claim <sup>26</sup>13, further comprising the steps of:

inferring occurrence of an event while managing a conversion of a lead to a prospect and of the prospect to a buying customer; and

using the particular subsystem to assist a salesperson in managing sales information.

#### REMARKS

Claim 11 was objected to regarding duplication of the phrase, "for use in." Accordingly, Applicants have deleted the duplicative language.

Claims 14-16 and 18 stand rejected under § 112, second paragraph, as indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter that Applicants regard as the invention. Applicants have considered the comments in the Office Action and have amended these claims in light of those comments. For example, the claims have been amended to reflect the proper dependencies.

Claims 1-8 and 10-20 stand rejected under § 103 as being unpatentable over Tom Negrino, "Sales-Automation Software," *Macworld*, v. 10, n. 10, pp. 144-48, October 1993 (hereinafter "Negrino") in view of Tony Seideman, "Way Cool! (Sales Force Automation)," *Sales & Marketing Management*, v. 146, n. 6, pp. 10-13, June 1994 (hereinafter "Seideman"), and further in view of John Hiatt, "Empowering the Global

Sales Force,” *International Business*, v. 7, n. 9, pp. 16-20, September 1994 (hereinafter “Hiatt”). Negrino teaches a computer-based sales automation system that is used in a sales process. It is believed that Examiner asserts that Negrino further teaches a plurality of subsystems corresponding to steps in the sales process and facilitating the respective steps in the process. Applicants respectfully submit that the products described in Negrino are primarily directed to contact management, *e.g.*, management of client histories and scheduling appointments. Negrino fails to teach or suggest integration of a plurality of subsystems into a single system for facilitating a sales process.

Moreover, it is respectfully asserted that the claimed invention infers occurrence of an event and a context in which the event occurred based at least in part on state changes in the system. It is believed that inferring the context suggests that a given event can occur in different contexts and that the system has the ability, based on the particular changes in state detected, to infer the particular context in which the event occurred. The system can also, based on the inferred context, facilitate an appropriate action to be performed during the sales process. By facilitating an action based on the context in which the event occurred, the system improves the efficiency with which a salesperson completes sales transactions.

Applicants believe that Negrino teaches systems that feature a linear progression from one step in a phase of the sales process to the next step in the phase. Accordingly, Negrino fails to adequately teach or suggest context-sensitive event recognition. While the present invention can handle sales processes characterized by a linear progression from one step to the next, it provides the additional ability to handle

non-linear sales processes in which a salesperson might not follow a predetermined sequence of steps. Salespeople can thereby conduct business with enhanced flexibility and versatility. It is respectfully asserted that context recognition, especially in combination with the integration of a plurality of subsystems corresponding to distinct phases of the sales process, significantly and advantageously enhances the usefulness of the claimed invention in facilitating business efforts in various phases of the sales process.

Accordingly, the claimed invention is neither taught nor suggested by, and is patentably distinct from, the prior art. Applicants respectfully request removal of the rejection of claim 1 under § 103. Claims 2-12 depend from claim 1 and further define particular features of various embodiments of the present invention over the prior art. Further, the combination of Negrino with Seideman, Hiatt, and/or Frye fails to teach or suggest the dependent claim embodiments because Negrino neither teaches nor suggests the claimed features discussed above. Applicants therefore also respectfully request that the rejection of these claims under § 103 be removed.

Claims 13-20 stand rejected under § 103 for reasons that appear to be similar to those discussed above in connection with claims 1-12. Applicants submit that the above discussion is equally applicable to claims 13-20 and request removal of the rejection of claims 13-20 under § 103.

New claims 21-43 further define various embodiments of the present invention over the prior art and are supported in the specification. Support for the subject matter claimed in claims 21-43 can be found, for example, from page 59, line 30 to page

61, line 7 and on page 63, lines 17-32. Accordingly, no new matter is asserted in new claims 21-43.

Applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. A notice of allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

**08/550,089**

Applicant(s)

**Jerome D. Johnson, et al.**

Examiner

**William N. Hugnet**

Group Art Unit

**2761**☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on Dec 10, 1997☒ This action is **FINAL**.☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

A shortened statutory period for response to this action is set to expire 3 month(s), or thirty days, whichever is longer, from the mailing date of this communication. Failure to respond within the period for response will cause the application to become abandoned. (35 U.S.C. § 133). Extensions of time may be obtained under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a).

**Disposition of Claims**☒ Claim(s) 1-43 is/are pending in the application.

Of the above, claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.☒ Claim(s) 1-43 is/are rejected.☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.☐ Claims \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction or election requirement.**Application Papers**☐ See the attached Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948.☒ The drawing(s) filed on Oct 30, 1995 is/are objected to by the Examiner.☐ The proposed drawing correction, filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is ☐ approved ☐ disapproved.☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).☐ All ☐ Some\* ☐ None of the CERTIFIED copies of the priority documents have been☐ received.☐ received in Application No. (Series Code/Serial Number) \_\_\_\_\_.☐ received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\*Certified copies not received: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).**Attachment(s)**☐ Notice of References Cited, PTO-892☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_☐ Interview Summary, PTO-413☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152

--- SEE OFFICE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES ---